ネコ光一
Illustration
Nardack
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ワールドティーチャー
異世界式教育エージェント
OVERLAP

WORLD TEACHER 2

異世界式教育エージェント

ネコ光一　Illustration：Nardack

World Teacher

– Other World Style Education & Agent –

– Volume 2 –

Encounters

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Chapter 8

Onto the New World

Two Years later

Since then, I've continued to train my body with everyone, under the watchful eyes of Elena. I'm now five years old and my height has grown to match it. I'm studying magic with Noel and I'm being taught the basics of adventuring by Dee. I've created a few spells that weren't in the book and their progress is rather well.

I've been having mock battles with Dee, since he's a former adventurer he's very strong, but there are always a few openings in self-taught styles, and so I beat him. I felt bad, but the sight of him being comforted by Noel was refreshing.

Since the chance to surprise me with lessons the next day was lost, Dee felt that his pride as an educator was hurt. Though he is likely to get stronger if he practices, he says that he'd like to become a cook, which I think regrettable. He actually has quite the touch for cooking, though its regrettable, I'll be pleased if he can learn to cook food from my previous life. I want him to chase his dreams if he can.

The preparations to attend school are advancing steadily.

I've been making medicine with an unusual medicinal herb that I found on the mountain and selling it. Using this method I may just be able to pay the entrance fees for school quickly and with no issues.

We should be able to survive these three years rather comfortably.

One day I finally taught Dee everything I knew from Japan to Dee as if he were my disciple. "There is nothing left for me to teach you. With this you've learned everything." Though I'm a five year old child my training is constant and ongoing, even if I were to be strolling through the forest or a mountain path, I'm constantly training

Today a new world is being introduced to me, I'm running in the sky.

To explain why I'm so happy, I have to first talk about two spells.

One is 『Boost』, its effect is to improve physical strength. Once it's activated, I can surpass the limits of the human body, increasing my speed by several times and making it so I can crush rocks with my bare hands. Naturally a person's body isn't suited for such actions, however this problem is averted by coating the body in a layer of mana. It reveals the user's potential, but since the mana consumption for the spell is extremely intense, there are very few masters of the spell. Because the spell doesn't have any effects that would place it in an attribute-class, its considered a "colorless" spell.

『Boost』 is a spell that can even be found in my magic tome.

As I experiment and examine the spell I notice that its effect is literally to cover the body in magic power. You can think of it as a magic power mecha suit, yet the main problem with the spell is how much energy it wastes. In my previous life, I had quite a bit of medical knowledge, and because of that I understood the human body, this all helped me squash the useless waste. I know the point that you should protect by the situation from a flow of the blood, the expansion and contraction of the muscle, and the movement of the body's structure during strenuous action.

The result of adding this knowledge to my trials allowed long term use of 『Boost』. I have the power to send a goblin flying with my fist and reach the lake to gather demon grass in a few minutes, It almost feels like I'm no longer human.

The other original spell is called 『Air Step』.

As revealed by the name, the spell makes it so that you can create a temporary scaffold in the air, though it only lasts for two seconds and disappears immediately after. Though this spell will be seen as one with a major defect, I don't see it as a problem if I can just continue to make scaffolds and use them to fly. When I first made the spell it was intended to be used for flying, but due to it being difficult to adjust the speed, my body was forced to taste

the spell's recoil so I gave up on it. Eventually I settled on this method, which can be both fast and slow due to the use of footholds.

By practicing these two spells I can now move at the speed of a car while in the sky. I'm able to ignore wind pressure due to the 『Boost』spell increasing my physical endurance.

The destination of my flight was the neighboring country separated by the mountains.

It is still the Mephisto continent, but if you cross the ocean then you'll meet the mountain which is the edge of the continent.

I practiced magic, even while the sea – which lies as a border – crossed to my side of the horizon. After I went there for the first time I learned that it was called 『Aldorodo』. Its a place with its own unique culture but aside from that there aren't that many differences from the rest of the Mephisto Continent. I've heard that there is a port city in Aldorodo that is frequently traded with; it would take a normal ship about two days to go back and forth from there. That being said, it seems to only be a trip that would only take an hour from here.

However, the sea that separates us is the home of a demon that attacks when storms roll in, and can sink a ship in a matter of minutes . There is also a formation of cliffs that block the edges of the continent and make it difficult to find a place to land. In other words one would be stuck with no option but to land in an area of the downtown shopping area.

Yet, these problems are completely irrelevant to I, who can freely run through the sky. They are issues for the mules that sail ships.

My curiosity leads me to fly to the new continent.

I flew in the sky without a serious problem, and, several minutes later, I arrived at the neighboring continent safely. The half remains in magic, I have about half of my overall mana pool, which should be enough to get me through any foreseeable issue. The wide expanse of the forest is spread before my view and gives the impression of looking at the Mephisto Continent in reverse.

I thought this not to have any problem and expected it without being able to extend a trip to the town by trouble when father heard it when it was the other side..... The town feels deserted. I've no choice, when there are no other sources of life around, where else do you look but to the sky?

I shut my eyes and counted to three, Recovery complete.

Though it seems like a joke, magic can be recovered quickly by harmonizing with the mana in the atmosphere. The book didn't mention anything about this method, and it seems that Noel can't use the technique either. I'm still unsure why. There are no issues with her body, and she uses the right method, well in the end the answer will reveal itself in time.

I begin to run in the sky again.

Without having any particular destination in mind, I fly between the trees while going against the wind. I slow down as I start looking for a village while feeling a cool comfortable breeze, but I can't find anything like that. This forest is really wide. If anyone enters on foot without preparing, they'd surely get lost.

As I advance through the forest, I finally see an end to the trees and decide that is a good enough sign for me to take a short rest, I take a seat on the branch of a particularly enormous tree.

I take out a container of water from a bag I had slung over my shoulder and look down on the forest beneath the trees, keeping up a degree of caution.

(– – – –)

..... Hm?

Something feels wrong.

There isn't a sense of murderous intent. It feels like a hidden entity is moving about in the area. The wind seems to have gotten stronger, a sign that doesn't bode well. For now should I continue to examine the situation?

I turn in the general direction of the discomforting feeling and activate a 『Search』 spell.

It works similar to a sonar. The principle is the same as when one would throw a stone on the surface of water and observe the ripples. The spell itself sends out a sort of wave made of mana that looks for mana in the area. The main fault with this spell is that it notifies the other party if they're picked up by it. However that notification is mostly an unconscious sense and from Noel's testimony is unlikely to give away my position because I can blend in with the area's mana flow.

Since discretion is important when scouting for enemies this spell will be labelled as worthless.

The ripple of mana is shown in my mind.

Though this search inserted an image of all the mana perceived in the area, it also means that It includes the animals and all of the innumerable living beings in the area. There seem to be five… no, six reactions from humans in the area. Even though the spell hasn't located the cause for the discomforting feeling from earlier, I finally find the person. I store my water back as I find it and jump down towards where the person is.

By the way, this is my first encounter with someone who's not an attendant of mine , and it may be a bad idea to suddenly appear and casually greet them. The other party could be a bad person who'd do unspeakable things to a five-year old like myself. The possibility of something strange happening is too high for me to not worry.

First I'll observe the other party, and from that determine whether or not I should appear before them? Though there are six people that were revealed in my search, the leaves crushed under their feet reveal another person, one who is putting in the extra effort not to be noticed by them. I don't think the group will have an easy time finding the individual.

In the worst case scenario it'll end up as a brawl and I should be able to get away by running through the sky, I doubt they'll chase after me in the sky. I land in a small distance from the reaction point and move over to them quietly.

If the individual gets away from the reaction point and sneaks away for a while, the group most likely won't find them. I try to avoid remembering a spy mission I had in the past. Because a strong wind blew past the trees, the sound of my movement is diverted.

I advance in a slow creeping fashion until I finally reach the gap of trees.

If they're in such a place, with no family or any other people, what kind of person are they? That person seems to be an [Elf] who lives in the forest. Moreover, they have long ears that point out sideways, and long flowing hair that shines in an emerald green light. Their hair parts before their beautiful emerald-coloured eyes, and in combination with their nose and mouth, gives off the impression of an astoundingly beautiful woman. The way her body has curves highlighting all the right places emphasizes her sex appeal; she is an attractive woman who I want to get close to by any means.

She is an absolute beauty no matter how one would look at her.

Her breathing is rough as she desperately clings to a tree branch, beads of sweat are growing abundant on her face as she tries her hardest not to fall. Her mantle is in tatters, allowing the clothes that lie beneath to be easily seen. She has on a light breastplate made from some sort of leather, she wears a bright green skirt that starts just under her navel with a slit in it that exposes the skin beneath The skirt's hem leveled off just above the knee to give freedom of mobility. There were many flesh colors on her clothes.

There is a small cut on her right arm, it doesn't seem to have been treated at all judging by how blood is still finding exit from the wound.

It doesn't seem to be a very serious injury, the question is whether or not it is poisoned?

"I know you're there, show yourself."

The Elven female raises her voice in a threatening manner. The target of her accusation isn't me though, it is the group of five pushing past the trees without reservation.

She gives them a sharp glare, which is returned by the flight of a shining object from the bosom of one of the group's members. It whistles through the trees and lands quite close to me, and to make sure I won't be discovered I collect it.

The object is a knife, as expected, with something written in paint on the blade. The group of five closes in on the Elf's location as I am examining the knife. All of the members of the group are men that look to be thieves or bandits. Their breastplates are made from superior iron and it seems as though they have skin of considerable toughness as well.

A man wearing an eyepatch who appears to be the leader takes a step forward, as he did the entire group seems to have a vulgar smile float to their faces. I don't want to be acquaintances with such people. The Elf, in this situation would be, in every way, a far better choice of friend, but wait, is this situation itself not the scene of a crime? Let's continue observing their actions instead of moving based on appearances.

"This is great. You think it was hit by my knife that was poisoned "

"Naturally, it looks like it stopped moving."

"We should wait and see if it stands or if its just bluffing."

"That's a good Idea. So what'll we do if it's body is cold, shall we use our own bodies to heat it up? Ha Ha Ha."

"No no no, don't you actually want that? Why else would you stop to wait for us after trying so hard to escape?"

"Not to mention they sell higher if they're virgins, but how bout we let you keep it company if it consents? "

Well, there's no evil more splendid than the definite and obvious kind. I admire that their convenient delusion can reach such heights. Since I've confirmed that they are in fact enemies, I'm ready to intercede anytime in order to help Elf-san.

"Take this chance to act out your desires, I have called you forth……

Elf-san shuts her eyes and concentrates. This is magic…… yet something is different? There doesn't seem to be an Aria to her spell, A discomforting feeling can be felt from ahead of me, coming from the elf.

"To mediate and rush! Oh Wind! Become a Blade!" "

As she raised her hand in declaration the wind seemed to accelerate into a storm, bashing into everything. Even I, behind her, seem to float for a moment, but I use 『String』, It flies to a nearby tree where I fix my posture.

I think that the men ought to be blown away, but as the wind begins to settle down, and the leaves stop cascading my vision I see that they are simply scattered.

A painful expression floats on Elf-san's face as she realized this.

"Tch… Magic."

"You think we'll be scared by that, Who do you think we are?"

"Chase after it, That poison not only paralyzes the body but also obstructs the concentration of magic. If it were an ordinary man they wouldn't be able to move, but not an Elf."

"Is she on the ground or in a tree? She seems to have been playing around with us for a while."

"Ah, crap. Its rare for someone to catch an Elf."

"Bastards. Its for me to decide. Go after it now."

"What'll you do if its already hurt, any damage to it will hurt the price, so be sure not to overdo it."

The men move closer to her with ugly smiles on their faces, she refuses to wait for her fate, grabs a knife and holds it to her own throat.

“If you get any closer I’ll kill myself, I’d sooner die than be captive to vulgar brutes like you.”

“Oi Oi, Is it okay to wait to be killed? I said so didn’t I, you’ve got a good head on your shoulders .”

“That is……”

Elf-san shakes her head and averts her eyes.

The moment she lets her guard down, the man who appears to be the leader lunges out with his hands.

“Shi-!”

“ [Hahhahha]. No matter how strong you are, if you leave an opening its all over.”

The person himself may be terrible, but his skills are terribly competent. The chance that Elf-san had is shattered instantly, and it seems they have the ability to shoot out several blades at once.

However, Elf-san is not defeated quite yet. She fixes her posture, he flicks out two knives, then four more which she dodges by twisting her body, the knives are avoided and end up sticking into the back of a tree, one of them ends up close to me but I moved to the side to dodge it. The skill that she shows while on the brink of defeat is remarkable.

Yet, the knife isn’t normal, the fact that Elf-san is having a hard time getting up, even after leaving the leader’s grasp is evidence.

“The effect is great no? It may be a slow-acting poison yet its distinguished for its effect. A moment ago you were prepared to make a run for it but now you can’t move.”

“You…… vulgar trash.”

“Use your head for a moment, You don’t want to die do you?”

“It’s safe, this man is strong, but the price for his protection grows by the second.”

“Then, you should take the original proposal.”

“So that’s what you wanted all along… It’d be troublesome if I were to act violently and hurt your men, huh.”

“That’s right, how about I show you how an adult has a good time.”

“It may feel so good you’ll be in heaven though, [Hahaha].”

“Unpleasant, I died but it sure wasn’t heaven.”

“Woah Who Di-? Gua!”

A knife runs into a hand of a leader, and I rush to the front Elf-san during from the trees. The situation is my handiwork in several ways, I appear before the group of men.

“The Hell! You bastard, Where’d you come from?”

“Wait a sec… ain’t you just a kid, where’d you come from.”

Though they are shocked by the sudden appearance , when the group learns it is a child who stopped them, they cast hateful eyes upon him. I don’t really care that they want to taste, yet, It would be an embarrassment to me if they went and harmed Elf-san. Shall we fight?

“That all, looks like I’ve been given up on by these vulgar people”

“You did well you shitty brat.”

“Go away fuckin’ brat, mind your own business ”

“Don’t take me lightly because I’m a brat. I’ll fuckin’ kill you.”

Was it not enough even though I attacked and provoked them? Elf-san is desperately shouting towards me while struggling to stand. From her eyes I can tell that she is desperate and worrying purely about me. I'm a good person and I'd feel bad to know that I left her here as I escaped.

Though I'm happy for your feeling, please wait a moment.

"Hello Father-san I'm here to fight the bad guys."

I shout greatly at the man while shaking his hand. They never would have thought a child would be in this forest. As such they are convinced that I'd be with a guardian.

If such a child shouts that there is father behind them, its natural to show precaution and look back. Then what now? As they turn I spot my chance.

The moment they turn I use『Boost』on one of my arms, swinging it at twice the speed.

"" [Gyaa] !""

"" [Ga]. ""

"Dam-."

I throw the knife into the feet of the men, this is of course the Boss's knife from earlier, still coated with poison. I collect Elf-san with 『String』 and latch her on to a tree secretly.

"This is a lie right?　I turned around for a moment, what happened?"

"Yuu Damn Brat!"

"By the way, just so you know, these are your knives from earlier so you must know, is the poison deadly?"

"B-boss, antidote, Give us the antidote."

"Shut up! I've got the antidote right he…. oops."

I used 『String』 to steal the leather bag from the Leader's bosom, inside are two glass containers that I confirm, despite the dumbfounded expression of the follower's faces. One is a malicious color, and the other has detoxification written on it. Ah, so this is the antidote for the poison.

However, it looks like he only has enough antidote for one person.

"There isn't much in here. Certainly not enough for you lackies."

"That true boss!? "

"Tch, there isn't enough."

"I see, so that's what you were planning to do when we got the reward, you'd poison our drinks."

"That wasn't the plan."

"That's all nonsense from that brat."

"Your weakness as a leader is laughable."

Uh-oh, I intended to fan it a little more, but they collapse earlier than expected. It seems that their dissatisfaction with everyday life has all blown up at once, instead of being a leader that leads with charisma he did so with abuse.

As they fight between themselves I return to Elf-san.

"Are you safe?"

"Yes…, but who are you? "

"That will have to wait till later, first we'll see to your wound."

Though Elf-san still seems to have doubts she can barely move and waits as I treat her. The side of her arm with the wound is okay, but the blood has yet to staunch due to the deepness

of the wound. I can't afford to wait for the blood to stop, so I pull out a towel from my bag and prepare for emergency treatment.

"Hey! The damn brat is with the elf."

"Shit, kill the kid quickly."

Oops, Looks like I was noticed?

While I am stuffing the medicine into the bag I stole from the boss, Elf-san puts her hand on my cheek.

"It's dangerous if you stay here any longer, I'm alright now so you escape first."

"..... I understand."

"Thank you, you're a good child."

A smile from a beautiful elder sister like her holds great power. I shake my head in response for a moment before slipping my arm under her body.

"Lets run away together."

"Excuse me!?"

I activate 『Boost』 and lift her. Naturally I hold her in a princess cradle .

Though the length of my arm is insufficient for the lift of an adult female's body, I used 『String』 to help support her body.

And so I ran away with Elf-san.

Chapter 9

Reservation

"Here we go!" (Sirius)

"Wait, you'll get caught if you carry me like that. Don't mind me and just escape! " (Elf)

"Even if you say that, it just makes me want to help you even more. Besides, you're a very light onee-san so it's alright." (Sirius)

I'm strengthened by my [Boost] spell so I don't have any trouble but, I was serious when I said that she's very light.

And her body is really soft as well, which is a good thing but, does she even have any muscles? On the other hand, she's good at handling a knife, I guess these strange differences are related to her race.

I keep escaping while enjoying the softness of the elven lady but, the bandits are still following us as I expected them to.

"Wait you bastard! " (Bandit 1)

"You're just a fuckin' brat, I'll catch and paralyze you!" (Bandit 2)

"Hey, don't go thinking that you can escape from us while carrying that burden!" (Bandit 3)

They yell at me in a loud voice as I'm running, but that doesn't matter, what matters is that I keep a perfect distance between us, not too close to them but not too far either.

I could outrun them if I feel like it but right now, I really want to take care of these bastards. I also can easily get rid of them by shooting them with an invisible mana

bullet using my gun magic, but Elf-san is watching. It would be too troublesome to explain their deaths so I'll have to get by without dirtying my hands this time.

Though the bandits are following us closely, they are running in a clumsy way which means that the poison started taking effect. After confirming my location, I slowly stop running.

"Ha…ha… you finally reached your limit." (Bandit 1)

"Bastard… haa…since we're in a hurry, we'll finish you off quickly." (Bandit 2)

"It doesn't matter how much you beg… haa… we won't forgive you." (Bandit 3)

They're exhausted no matter how you look at them.

But they can only blame themselves, stamina is above everything else, they should have trained more. Well, I guess it can't be helped this time since they're poisoned.

"I see, you ran away to buy some time for the poison to take effect." (Elf)

"You're half-right, I guess? More importantly onee-san, we're going to fly so try not to bite your tongue." (Sirius)

"Fly? What do you mean?" (Elf)

"Alright, ready, set…" (Sirius)

As I use [Air step] and fly to the sky, an enormous thing butts in while crushing all the trees in its way.

That thing is a huge two-meters tall four armed bear, it doesn't really look like a regular bear because of its abnormally big nose though. When I used my [Search] spell earlier, I sensed it lurking around in the forest, I ran away to draw the bandits toward it. It should be all right to leave the rest to the bear. Besides.

"Ah! It's a gi-gigabear!" (Bandit 2)

“Le-let’s esca… -pe? My body?!” (Bandit 1)

“Hey! There is another one over here!” (Bandit 3)

“Help me! I can’t move!” (Bandit 2)

“Did we enter in their territory?! God dammit!” (Bandit 1)

There was not only one but various reactions. And by now, the paralysis should be slowly taking effect as well, it’s a truly desperate situation for them.

May the five of you have a safe trip to hell. If you reincarnate, try to become honest people next time.

With death-agony sounds echoing in my back, I leave the place while holding elf-san.

After safely rescuing Elf-san, I start looking for a watering-place as I hold the girl.

I have to give her the antidote and if I don’t treat her wound soon, it will leave a scar. It would be a shame for a scar to be left on that smooth pure white skin.

But the girl is… strangely quiet.

However, I think that normally, one wouldn’t be this calm after being saved by a child who then flew into the sky.

“…Say, we’re flying right now, right?” (Elf)

“That’s right. You’re scared? You want me to land?” (Sirius)

“Not at all, It’s amazing, amazing! Flying over the sky is so pleasant!” (Elf)

I guess I was wrong, she’s actually trembling with excitement isn’t she? But she’s unexpectedly tough. She just went through that whole situation, yet right now, she’s in high spirits like a child over the sky’s comfort. Even though her beauty makes her hard to talk to, when she shows this kind of face, I can’t help myself but feel close to her.

“Yeah… I’m alright. Never mind that, you guys get to enjoy this feeling all the time, I’m so jealous.” (Elf)

As I ponder while holding her, she suddenly starts talking toward empty space. Is she receiving an elf’s radio wave or something like that?

Hmm… a radio wave?

Now that I think about it, I’m having that discomforting feeling from earlier again. But it’s invisible, it’s the movement of some kind of no-chanting magic.

Could it be that she…….

“O-oh, I’m sorry, I got a little carried away. By the way, where are we going?” (Elf)

“It’s about time to land now.” (Sirius)

Just as she questions me as if to hide her embarrassment, I find a flowing river that crosses the forest. Since I don’t detect any enemy with my [Search] spell, I go down directly. Even If an enemy does come, I should be able to find out because the river’s surroundings are covered with white gravel and small rocks so I have a good view around me. I let Elf-san sit down on a rock and I take out the antidote from my backpack.

“This is the antidote. Think you can drink it by yourself?” (Sirius)

“My numbness didn’t go away yet. Please help me if you don’t mind.” (Elf)

She entrusts herself to me as if to say that I can do whatever I want. I take the antidote to elf-san’s lips in response to her expectations. It feels strangely hot unlike when I did it to Elena-san. I feel like I’m doing something forbidden for some reason. Does the fact that I can’t feel any lust at all because of my age even help?

“…Few. My body is getting hot.” (Elf)

“That means that your senses are coming back. I have to treat your wound fast before the paralysis disappears completely.” (Sirius)

I untie the towel I wrapped around her injury earlier and I confirm the state of the cut, it's still open but it's not bleeding anymore. I wash the towel in the river and I use it to wipe the coagulated blood around the wound. Though it would normally be pretty painful, there should be no pain thanks to the paralysis.

"I'm going to put my hand on your wound for a little while so please be patient." (Sirius)

"You can use healing magic?" (Elf)

"Well, it's a healing method indeed but it's slightly different, I guess?" (Sirius)

There is a spell that heals injuries in this world. It's a spell of the water attribute magic, it works by covering the wound with magic water that has healing properties. Though I tried to learn it, I ended up giving up because my compatibility was very bad; however, I can use something similar.

I press my hand on the wound, I concentrate some mana, and I pour it in Elf-san's body. We both stay silent for a while, but she notices something and starts looking embarrassed.

"Ah… oh god, I made you help me that much and I still didn't thank you yet." (Elf)

"Well, you're right. But I did it all on my own accord." (Sirius)

"That doesn't justify my behavior. It's only natural for me to thank you since you're my savior. But before that, can you tell me your name please?" (Elf)

"It's Sirius. Don't you normally give your name after asking for someone else's?" (Sirius)

"I'm sorry, it's common courtesy among us elves as well. My name is Shemifia Aramis.

Sirius-kun, you saved me. Thank you." (Shemifia)

A smile, she thanks me with a face beaming with a big smile. It's very pleasant when it comes from such a beautiful woman. Thanks for the treat.

"Ah well, we're both safe so it's fine Shimifia-san… can I call you that?" (Sirius)

“Just call me Fia since I’ll be calling you Sirius. By the way, what are you Sirius?” (Fia)

She is quite the aggressive young lady. *(EDN: In the good way ;D)*

No, the elf race seems to have a very long lifespan, she might be older than I was in my previous life so I can’t really call her a young lady, now can I?

“What? Can’t you tell by looking?” (Sirius)

“Yeah, you do look like you’re a child from the human race. However, even if you look normal in the front, you led five adults by the nose and used some unique magic never seen before. I traveled to many places but I’ve never seen a human like you.” (Fia)

As Fia says, I’m a nonstandard from other people’s perspective. And I even have the appearance of a five years old on top of that.

But no matter what anyone says, I’m just a human. I only happened to reincarnate with the memories of my previous life, but I wasn’t blessed with any special ability. This strength is the fruit of my own labor during my daily training. Even my magic is the result of the methods I made up myself.

“Even if you say so, I’m a genuine member of the human race. I’m a child and I’m still five years old.” (Sirius)

“Five years old? You do look like it but it seems very unlikely for a five years old to be able to use those movements.” (Fia)

“Well, it’s because of various circumstances. It’s hard to explain so I don’t really know what to say.” (Sirius)

Well… I just reincarnated and kept my previous memories really.

As I start having a slightly distant look, Fia misunderstands and begins to panic.

“I-I’m sorry. I reminded you of something unpleasant.” (Fia)

“Ah, no, you didn’t. Anyway, I’m just a normal human being, I got this strength as a result of a daily training. The possibilities of humans are infinite.” (Sirius)

“I don’t think so, but I feel like I can understand that when I look at you. You’d put adults to shame, wouldn’t you?” (Fia)

“I’ll take the compliment.” (Sirius)

“Please do. But, why did a human like you go out of his way to help me? Those guys weren’t amateurs. You would have been killed if you had failed.” (Fia)

“Maybe because I thought that my chances of success were high enough?” (Sirius)

“Still, humans consider the elf race’s members as pretty rare. Therefore, they try to capture us by using any cold-hearted means they can just like the bandits a little while ago. Well, you’re a human too but I know that you’re not like that.” (Fia)

Why did I help her?

I decided to help her only after the moment I saw everybody. I didn’t do it for a humanitarian reason. I most likely wouldn’t have helped if it was one of the five guys in Fia’s position.

In this world, the weak are meat and the strong do eat. Those guys obviously tried to capture Fia with gold and lust in mind, and I wanted to satisfy my own desires. I’m the same when you think about it.

“I just wanted to get to know you because of the rarity of your race… I guess? Also, because you’re a beautiful woman.” (Sirius)

The fact that she’s beautiful had a lot to do with it.

Though I said that seriously, Fia starts to laugh out loud with a dumbfounded look.

“Ha, ahahahaha, you want to get to know me because I’m pretty? It’s my first time seeing someone revealing his ulterior motives so casually.” (Fia)

“Well, that’s because I’m a man. Is there a problem with answering this honestly?” (Sirius)

“Hehe, yes there is, but it feels pretty good to be called a beautiful woman so it’s all right. Say, can I meet you after?” (Fia)

“Oh, what do you mean?” (Sirius)

“Well, I mean, let’s be friends. No, rather, please be my friend.” (Fia)

I give her a firm handshake with my free hand. At last, I was able to make an acquaintance other than Elena & co.

Moreover, she is a beautiful elven woman, that’s a good start and a good omen for the future.

“hmm, I wonder if my numbness has disappeared… Hey, Sirius, it’s good of you to try to cure my wound but, this is the consequence of my own mistake, so you don’t need to take care of it.” (Fia)

“It’s all right, I think I’ll be done soon.” (Sirius)

When I remove the hand that I was pressing until now, the wound that was under it disappeared completely as if it was never there. Fia starts touching in admiration the place where the wound used to be.

“This is amazing and I almost couldn’t feel the mana. It’s my first time seeing chant-less recovery magic.” (Fia)

“It’s not recovery magic. Since I don’t have any attribute, my compatibility with the water attribute is pretty bad.” (Sirius)

“What? You don’t have an attribute? You’re joking right?” (Fia)

What I do is pouring my mana in the other party to stimulate hers, then I just have to activate the person’s self-regeneration. I actually came up with this to cure my own injuries but it’s also possible to use it on others. It’s cheap and I call it the regeneration spell.

It takes some time unlike the magic recovery with water, and since it demands to stimulate the other party's mana, a precise control of mana is necessary. However, it's the only type of recovery I can use. It's pretty bad and not natural.

And, as I expected, she's surprised to hear that I don't have an attribute. The elves have the same opinion on that, don't they?

"Haven't you been flying in the sky? I figured that you were from the wind attribute and that you flew by using a wind spell." (Fia)

"Well, I don't really fly, I just run by using mana. Moreover, you were using the wind attribute as well when you used those magic spirits, right?" (Sirius)

"… How did you find out that I can use magic spirits?" (Fia)

Her face takes a form similar to a Noh mask. Did I screw up?

No, I think I should be honest with her. I start talking without minding her.

"Perhaps it was because the wind spell you used against those men was too strong when compared to the amount of mana you used? When you did that, I started to feel something odd around you." (Sirius)

The wind spell she used against those thugs was a misfire but, from what I sensed, she only used a handful of mana. If her mana wasn't obstructed by the poison, the bandits would have been blown away, as she said it herself.

And when I touched Fia, I confirmed that the discomforting feeling doesn't come from her but, it's whirling around in her surroundings. I believe that that discomfort comes from a spirit and if that's the case, then it's most likely a wind spirit.

Fia, with a serious face, answers to my explanation.

"Sirius, can you see the spirits?" (Fia)

“No, I can’t see them. But since I felt something weird around you, I just figured that it was because of spirits.” (Sirius)

“That’s right. Is it your first time seeing spirit magic?” (Fia)

“Yes, it’s a first for me. However, it’s…” (Sirius)

The spirit magic is way overpowered, just like my gun magic. Though it was written that it’s strong in the documents I checked, after seeing the real thing, I think it’s above that. At any rate, with a small amount of mana, she can call forth spirits to make something like a storm. I have a hunch that if she gets serious, she could make a natural disaster at the level of a tornado.

“I misfired it but, it was great right? That’s why I try to hide it since my tribe would make me use it even by force if it’s found out.” (Fia)

Certainly, if it’s that power, it’s perfect to use as a weapon

Under normal circumstances, elves always try to be peaceful but, if they find out about the spirit magic, they might unexpectedly turn to the offensive.

“To call the spirits, I only have to use some of my mana, but the spirits go overboard if I give way to my feelings. Because it’s like that, I have to constantly handle my emotions.” (Fia)

She talks with a smile, yet it looks forced, even though she’s trying to hide it. She probably goes through a lot of hardships because of that power. It’s a pain that only those who have a power too strong can understand….. Too strong, huh?

“Oh, come on… this is my issue, so you don’t have to make that kind of face, Sirius.” (Fia)

“No, I don’t understand this spirit business, but I can understand when it comes to hiding power.” (Sirius)

That's right, this has got to be fate. I'll make this girl who's suffering by herself understand that she's not alone.

As I'm about to show my magic to Fia, who's questioningly tilting her neck, I notice some sort of huge body drawing near.

"…Something is approaching." (Sirius)

"Eeh…..Ah! Well, my spirits certainly are agitated. Wait, what's that?!" (Fia)

Turning my eyes up to the sky, I see a huge thing flying. It's a big animal with a lizard's body and wings growing on its back, a demon said to be a dragon subspecies in books.

"A wyvern, huh. But I see only one, did it stray from its flock?" (Sirius)

"Let's hide and calmly observe it. It would be troublesome if it targets us." (Fia)

"Too late. It seems like it already caught sight of us." (Sirius)

While letting out a high-pitched roar, the wyvern comes straight toward here.

I think It's probably three times as big as me, and its solidity is even greater according to books.

"It's like a young dragon, isn't it? Even so, it's quite big." (Sirius)

"Oh for crying out loud! I guess it can't be helped, for now, hold on a litt-" (Fia) *(TLN:If you didn't get it, she's angry since he's being carefree)*

Fia tries to release a spell while holding steady, but she seems to be unable to concentrate her mana, probably because the poison didn't wear out yet. I pat the shoulder of the girl sweating from her forehead in order to reassure her, and I walk out to the front to protect her.

"Come back Sirius. I can't kill it, but I can at least drive it away." (Fia)

“It’s alright. Please leave it to me from here.” (Sirius)

The Wyvern is now approaching imminently. Locating its prey, the wyvern dives down to attack, and aiming at it, I point my index finger.

“Are you paying attention, Fia? Your spirit magic isn’t the only powerful one. I’ll show it to you.” (Sirius)

“Wait, what are you say-…” (Fia)

“ [Magnum] ” (Sirius)

From my fingertip, I fire the mana bullet that I have fired many times over the past few years to increase my accuracy.

I picture the fired bullet exploding upon the [Impact] ’s collision, so it instantly goes through the Wyvern’s eye and releases a shock wave in its brain, making its head explode.

Naturally, the Wyvern doesn’t survive, it keeps gliding with the momentum of its nose-dive and it passes beside us to then fall on the ground.

Fia looks dumbfoundedly at the Wyvern that was annihilated in only an instant, but she recovers after a short time and slowly turns her face to my direction.

“Just now…. what was that? What the heck did you do?” (Fia)

“This is one of the original spells I can use. It’s strong as you can see, but what do you think of it, Fia?” (Sirius)

“I have no words. It doesn’t have a chant, and yet it fires a magic this powerful…” (Fia)

“As I thought, it’s amazing even from your point of view. The spell just now, can you not tell anyone about it?” (Sirius)

“I-It’s not like I intend to do that, but, why? Using this magic would get you a huge amount of invitations from nobles and royalty… ah?!” (Fia)

“It’s saddening that so many people are likely to exploit children, isn’t it? Look, we’re the same, Fia.” (Sirius)

Fia isn’t the only one who’s hiding her powers. In short, we shared each other’s secrets.

“I see… mhm. Then, since you didn’t pry earlier, I won’t pry either.” (Fia)

“Got it.” (Sirius)

That’s how it is… Fia and I are friends with the same secret.

The girl realizes my intentions and this time she turns a genuine smile towards me.

While waiting for Fia’s recovery, I check the body of the Wyvern. Since its head exploded and scattered blood, I need to finish taking care of it before demons gather.

And, as I examine the parts likely to sell, Fia, who’s now able to walk, looks up at the Wyvern while humming.

“But still…… It’s really amazing~. You defeated the Wyvern just by pointing your finger at it.” (Fia)

“I’m not that good, I just aimed at a soft part. Because the eyes are not covered by scales, as one would expect.” (Sirius)

“Just being able to aim at such a small part is plenty enough in itself. Putting that aside, what are you doing?” (Fia)

Although it’s not that big or solid, it’s still said to be a dragon kind, isn’t it? I’m trying to tear off the raw materials on it, but let alone the scales, my blade can’t even cut through the wings’ patagium.

“I want this patagium, but this knife is no good. It’s solid and flexible, so I want to take it somehow but…” (Sirius)

“Ah, it’s certainly impossible with this small knife. Take this, I’ll lend it to you.” (Fia)

Fia throws and hands me a completely green shining knife. I've seen my share of knives in my previous life, but it's my first time seeing a knife that looks so beautiful and so superior in practical utility.

I feel it would be sacrilegious to use this piece of art, but since Fia says "Go ahead" and shows me a smile, I accept and use it without reserve.

"Oh… This is amazing" (Sirius)

"It's light and strong since it's a knife made of mithril metal which easily conducts mana." (Fia)

By just lightly stroking the surface, I easily cut the patagium without even damaging it. I keep cutting it while astonished by the sharpness and, having finished securing it, I part from the Wyvern in a satisfied mood.

"Well, thank you for lending me this amazing knife. I finished easily thanks to it." (Fia)

"It's not like this amount isn't enough, but is this alright? You didn't tear off the other parts like the scales and such." (Fia)

"My luggage is full just from the patagium. If I get any more greedy, it will hinder my mouvements in the sky." (Sirius)

If the patagium is this strong and solid, then it can be used for various tasks. As I carry the folded patagium, Fia stares at me with a strange expression.

"This isn't greedy. If it was the adventurers I've seen, they'd tear off every part to the bone and sell it. Especially since the Wyvern is a dragon kind and therefore sells for a high price. " (Fia)

Though it would become profitable when sold, It'd be troublesome if the source of the material is suspected since I'd have Dee sell it. Even so, I deceitfully pick up a few useful looking scales and secure them.

“My situation is troublesome in various ways, so I can’t sell the material easily. Knowing that, you’re sure you don’t need it, Fia?” (Sirius)

“I’m on my way back to my hometown, you know. Even if I take it home, it’s not like I can sell it, therefore I don’t need it.” (Fia)

“Then, let’s leave it behind. That aside, how are you feeling?” (Sirius)

While floating a smile, Fia hops up, puts her hand on my head and pats me. Mhm… being patted by a beauty isn’t too bad.

“Though I’m still a little numb, it shouldn’t be a problem if it’s just a question of moving. Thanks to you.” (Fia)

“Then, let’s move soon, shall we? The Wyvern’s corpse might gather monsters.” (Sirius)

“Yeah. Then, I’m in your care.” (Fia)

Fia comes toward me approvingly while smiling. This was my intention from the beginning, but I surely didn’t think that it would be requested by the other party.

“It can’t be helped. Then, I’ll carry you.” (Sirius)

“Hehe, thank you. Ah, please don’t misunderstand though, I’m only entrusting my body because it’s you, Sirius. Any other man is no good.” (Fia)

“I am honored to be trusted that much. Well, shall we go, my lady?” (Sirius)

“Yes, go!” (Fia)

Holding Fia in a princess cadle once again, I kick the air and run in the sky. My destination is Fia’s hometown, I’m going there because it doesn’t seem far from here

And so, Fia and I keep cheerfully running in the sky while chatting.

“In our elf village, it’s a tradition to travel to the outside world when you attain a certain age. I also came to that time several years ago and I kept going around the world from then onwards.” (Fia)

“What a coincidence, I plan to travel the world when I grow up as well.” (Sirius)

“Oooh, that’s no good. I walked into a lot of problems and various hardships, even though the journey was really fun.” (Fia)

Though I heard that elves are an unsociable species which rarely goes out of the forest, I don’t feel a tiny bit of that atmosphere from Fia who’s wholeheartedly and happily laughing.

“You seem somewhat different from the elves I’ve seen in books, Fia.” (Sirius)

“Well, even if I say so myself, I’m an eccentric among elves. Ordinary elves don’t try to go out and shut themselves in the forest, they also have a high pride for some reason, but I’m the opposite. I wanted to know the outside world and I joyfully rushed out to the outside when I attained the age of the tradition.” (Fia)

“Haha, I don’t hate this kind of personality” (Sirius)

“Hehe, that’s good. Thereupon, I enjoyed my journey, but I had to return to my hometown after ten years. And as I was reluctantly going back, I got attacked.” (Fia)

“And those guys somehow managed to deal with you, right?” (Sirius)

“Yeah, though it would have been easy to use the spirit magic, I was a little negligent.” (Fia)

It seems that on her way home, her travel expenses hit rock bottom, so she accepted to work for a group of people which happened to be those guys. In addition, there was a beginner adventurer among them so Fia taught him various things as his senior, but those guys tricked the novice into giving the paralysis poison to Fia.

“When those guys dragged me to a place I didn’t know, the child gave me a drink as a gift with a grateful expression, not knowing anything. After drinking it, I noticed the poison that those guys sneakily mixed in and I ran away before the paralysis started completely taking effect….” (Fia)

“Then they caught up, and that’s when you met me.” (Sirius)

“That’s right. Well, those guys received a well deserved punishment, but I might be a little grateful to them now. I mean, they allowed me to meet you, Sirius.” (Fia)

“You just calmly said something embarrassing. Well, I do the same though.” (Sirius)

“Goodwill is a principle that shouldn’t be hidden. I’m glad if you think the same, Sirius.” (Fia)

I merely helped, but I didn’t think I’d be hit straight with goodwill. As I advance in the sky while enjoying such a pleasant goodwill, the forest stops as if it was completely cut off and a meadow spreads out.

Though it’s not very wide, it’s a strange meadow where no monsters are to be found.

“Hmmm the forest beyond the meadow is the elves’ domain, so there is a protection barrier against humans and monsters and such. This meadow is a border.” (Fia)

It seems that if I go directly from the sky, I’ll most likely be considered as an enemy and attacked, so we land near the forest following Fia’s instruction.

“Here is enough. I know because this forest is like my garden.” (Fia)

“Heh, as expected from the people of the forest. By the way, what would happen if I enter in this forest?” (Sirius)

“Intruders other than elves are immediately detected by the barrier and receive a baptism of arrows, I guess. Even if you somehow deal with that, you’d be driven mad by the directions and probably wouldn’t reach the village.” (Fia)

“The security is strict, isn’t it? There is not much danger from foreign enemies if that’s how it is.” (Sirius)

“The danger certainly is small, but that’s exactly why the Elves prefer staying indoors. I’m a little worried when thinking of the future.” (Fia)

Though Fia smiles bitterly, she sits on a nearby rock without trying to enter the forest, she then tells me to sit down while tapping the place next to her. There is still some of this morning’s time to spare, and since I want to talk more, I sit next to Fia who smiles when our eyes meet.

“Nevertheless, flying in the air was really fun. It covers in a blink a distance that would normally take a day or two to go through, and above all, it feels really good.” (Fia)

“I agree that it’s pleasant, even though the wind pressure is harsh when using too much speed.” (Sirius)

“Hey, Sirius. I was about to stop doing it earlier, but I have a favor to ask of you again. Can you teach me the way to fly?” (Fia)

“You mean [Air step] ? Since its consumption is intense, I wouldn’t recommend it.” (Sirius)

“Even so, it’s good enough. So far, I tried flying many times, however, I did nothing but fall, which was not fun at all.” (Fia)

It seems that, in the past, she attempted to fly by firing the wind of her spirit magic directly on her body, but that was closer to jumping rather than flying, she was lamented from only falling and not being able to float in the sky.

“I somehow survived by firing wind right before falling down, but it didn’t go well no matter how much I tried. Still, I can’t give up on flying. So please, help!” (Fia)

She seems serious, she’s asking with her hands clasped before me.

“I’ll do anything you ask. You may even become my lover when you grow up.” (Fia)

“Putting the lover part aside, you should give up on my way of flying, Fia.” (Sirius)

“… As I thought, it’s impossible, isn’t it?” (Fia)

“That’s not it. You can see the spirits of the wind, so you’ll be able to fly if you practice.” (Sirius)

“Practice? But I told you earlier that I can only jump with the wind.” (Fia)

“No, it all depends on the way you use the wind. Listen, there is a phenomenon called lift but….” (Sirius)

If the airplanes from my previous life flew over the sky, It was because they used the phenomenon called lift. However, I doubt Fia will be able to understand it even if I explain it minutely, so I thin down some wood and use it to make a model airplane which I hang with a string, and I continue explaining while demonstrating the real thing by exposing the airplane to the wind.

“You can make the rear float by orienting the wind to this direction. The wind’s direction is what really matters.” (Sirius)

“… Amazing, I feel like I might become able to fly somehow. However, it seems difficult to control. And It probably won’t end with a simple injury if I fall. “ (*Fia*

“I’ll be here, right? I’ll help if you’re in danger, so it’s all right to practice without fearing failure.” (Sirius)

“Fearing failure…. huh. Well then, I’ll take on this challenge!” (Fia)

Mustering her motivation, Fia immediately begins practicing. Since receiving the wind while standing seems difficult, she starts in a prone position.

“As I am now, I’d look quite uncool from an outsider’s point of view, wouldn’t I?” (Fia)

“I’m the only one watching. Besides, you’ll probably be able to fly normally once you get used to it.” (Sirius)

“Oh well, my priority is flying rather than my appearance. By the way… why are you moving?” (Fia)

I was standing next to Fia, but I had slightly moved toward her upper-body.

“I shouldn’t have to say it, but won’t the insides of your skirt be visible?” (Sirius)

“I don’t mind them being seen if it’s by you, Sirius.” (Fia)

“… Just get started already” (Sirius)

“But that was the truth. Well then… wind, please!” (Fia)

A strong wind blows from the front with Fia’s mutter. Though I was wondering if it’s safe for her to take the wind pressure on the face, Fia makes sure it doesn’t strike her eyes and mouth by manipulating the flow of the wind.

While I was admiring her high control ability, the wind’s strength increased, and she finally succeeded in floating from the ground.

“I, I did it! I finally flew over the…. ah!?” (Fia)

Getting carried away, Fia momentarily loses control of the wind which becomes a storm, and she ends up being blown off sky-high in the blink of an eye.

“Oh, I have to catch her, don’t I?” (Sirius)

However, I fly and rescue her before she drops down. When I catch her in my arms, Fia gets excited and clings to my neck.

“I flew at last! Thanks Sirius!” (Fia)

“That was good. So… what are you going to do next?” (Sirius)

“I’ll try again, obviously. I’ll fly even higher this time. So, though It might be troublesome, please take care of me” (Fia)

As soon as she came down to the ground, Fia resumed her practice. Hoping to fly at will, she repeated it a lot, going higher at every retry, and of course, falling just as much. I rescued her each time, and though her falling rate had already slightly exceeded two digits, she kept trying without giving up.

Dropping down that much has to be traumatic, or so I thought, but Fia isn't familiar with the fear of falling….

"Ah, I failed~. Thank you, my prince." (Fia)

"You're not getting discouraged at all, are you?" (Sirius)

In fact, she happily and fully enjoyed herself, being rescued in the air like a princess of a fairytale. I admire the girl's attitude.

She progresses very fast thanks to her happily practicing that way, and by the time noon came to an end, her hovering had become perfect.

Though she wanted to eat lunch in the middle of a rest break, she didn't have any food since she ran away from those men in a hurry. So I shared the sandwich I had, but she snorted *(TLN:Not arrogantly, imagine steam coming out of her nose)*(EDN: Like a pig, or boar.) and roughly approached me to ask for the recipe of the mayonnaise I made, being deeply touched by its taste. Although I taught it to her since I don't really have a reason to hide it, preparing it is difficult so I wish her the best of luck. Just in case, I warn her in advance not to overeat.

After the break, she gets back to practice, but she started to get the hang of it, didn't she? Her falling frequency is lower and she's even able to somersault in the air. Though the insides of her skirt are fully exposed, it seems that, like she said, she doesn't mind it.

And thus, by the time she became able to land safely even without my intervention, the sun started to sink slowly beyond the line of the horizon.

"Mhm, you passed perfectly." (Sirius)

“I did it! Thanks to you~” (Fia)

We end it with a delighted high five, and I turn my gaze to the sunken sun.

Elena is likely to worry if I don’t return soon. Looking at Fia wanting to inform her of my going home, she had a sad expression having also noticed.

“It’s a goodbye… isn’t it?” (Fia)

“That’s right. However, since I memorized this place, I’ll come to meet again.” (Sirius)

“… Sorry. One can’t go out of the forest for about ten years when coming back from a journey. Therefore, it will be impossible for a while… most likely.” (Fia)

“What’s with that? I can just go in the forest…. is that impossible too?” (Sirius)

“Indeed. All non-elves are unconditionally chased away from there, even I might have some difficulty to defend when entering.” (Fia)

“It’s a racial issue? That problem is everywhere, huh” (Sirius)

“Seriously. Even though you and I became close like this, what’s the problem with race?! And what’s with that purification ceremony rule? Though it’s said to purify the impurities from outside and such, it doesn’t need ten years, right?” (Fia)

She kicks a stone at her feet while muttering complaints. Though she becomes sulky for a little while, she remembers something and she leans over by dropping to her knees, matching her line of sight to mine.

“Though I already said it many times, thank you very much, Sirius. I want to give you something to express my gratitude, but I don’t have much things I can give.” (Fia)

“Don’t worry about it. Because I got to know you, and I had a lot of fun too.” (Sirius)

“My heart isn’t satisfied by that. What else can I-…. Ah, there is that. You said it’s amazing, didn’t you?” (Fia)

Saying so, she gives me her Mithril knife. To be honest, I want it, but I wonder if it's alright to hand over such a high quality object so easily. Besides, looking at it properly, there also appears to be something like a carved seal on it.

"Isn't this the kind of thing that's passed down from generation to generation? Giving it to an outsider is no good, don't you think?" (Sirius)

"It's alright. I was told to take care of myself rather than the knife, and I wouldn't have been able to go home safely if not for you, Sirius. Take it without holding back." (Fia)

"…… if you insist, I'll gratefully take it." (Sirius)

"Though there is another thing I want to add, will you receive it?" (Fia)

"This much is surely enough, but if that satisfies you…" (Sirius)

"Well then, close your eyes for a little bit~" (Fia)

Because it's unlikely that she'd do anything after all that, I obediently closed my eyes.

After a few seconds…… I instinctively I felt something soft on my mouth so I opened my eyes, and there was Fia's face before me. And as I thought that she's really is a beautiful person, she opened her eyes and laughed embarrassedly while separating with a slightly reddened face.

“Oh c’mon…. Even though I told you to close your eyes.” (Fia)

“…… Wouldn’t you normally do it on the cheek or the forehead?” (Sirius)

“Huh!? You’re not surprised at all. Even though it was my first time… how sly of you.” (Fia)

“I am surprised plenty enough. However, suddenly doing it on the mouth, the elves’ way of expressing friendliness sure is extreme.” (Sirius)

Didn’t we meet just today? I helped her in various ways, but it’s unlikely that she’d fall in love with a child. Our race and customs are different as well, this is probably something like a way to thank a good friend.

“No, I’m serious. Though I’m wondering why myself, I seriously fell in love with you. So I’m making a reservation. It’s as I told you before noon. I’ll do anything I can for you.” (Fia)

“You’re joking, right? Besides… What do you mean by reservation?” (Sirius)

“In ten years, you’ll be fine a adult, right? I’m making a reservation as I want you to take me at that time, if it’s alright with you. Ah, however, if it’s you, you’ll be able to get about two or three marriage partners in ten years, right? In that case, I’ll be good with just being a lover.” (Fia)

“… And you’re really alright with that?” (Sirius)

“Of course. I’m currently 252 years old, so I’ll still be at the prime of my womanhood when you’ll be an old-man. It’s my one-sided argument, therefore I’ll give up if it’s impossible but….” (Fia)

Though she is laughing, she looked a little sad when she talked about giving up. She’s been exposing her genuine feelings so far, I have to respond properly.

“I don’t really get the elves’ aging. Hah… I understand. Let’s meet again in ten years, If your feelings don’t change by then… I’ll take you.” (Sirius)

“Really!? They won’t change so be at ease~” (Fia)

Fia clings to me with a smile spread of her face. Thinking about it, Fia is beautiful and her personality isn't bad, it's to the extent that I think she'd be wasted on me. Not bad.

"Then, Sirius… let's meet again." (Fia)

"Mhm, when that time comes, let's come here again." (Sirius)

"Yes, I'll be waiting." (Fia)

With a last handshake, Fia disappeared in the forest while widely waving her hand. Confirming that her figure completely vanished, I dashed to the sky, going back to the mansion.

And thus the meeting between me and the elf woman Fia came to an end, with a reunion planned for ten years later.

Though I don't know how it will turn out in the future, I look forward to meeting her again.

Chapter 10

The Retired Old Man's Rhapsody

Several days after meeting Fia, I came to the Adroad continent again.

I came back since I didn't get to do my exploration last time because of the troubles I had with Fia. Well, despite that, I guess I did learn some useful stuff from her. If we do meet again, I'll just think of her as a lover I left and neglected or something like that. It's ridiculous to worry now about an uncertain future

Because I went east last time, this time I'll try going west. It would be nice if there is just a simple village in that direction. I already got my share of elf troubles with Fia.

While the east side is only flat forests, this side has a mountainous terrain. There seems to be a lot of demons, so there probably won't be any human villages. Still, I fly around while searching, yet I don't see anything. Is this also a miss?

In order for my actions not to go to waste, I have to remember to do some mapping during breaks. While I'm writing on the map as I wonder where I should go next, my ears unexpectedly catch on some sound. I raise my face from the map and confirm that I'm really hearing something. However, looking around, I can't see the origin of the sound. It has a certain rhythm, and sounds like it's coming from the other side of the mountain. This can't be ignored.

Hurrying, I close the map and fly towards the source of the noise.

As I make a detour around the mountain, I find a solitary house built in a carved out tree.

It's pretty far but, I can see smoke coming from something that looks like a chimney, there has to be someone living there. Even so, for someone to reside in a private house in the midst of this forest… it must be fun to live this eccentrically.

I could just go through the sky and land there but it smells like trouble, so I get off at a nearby place and switch to going on foot for the rest of the way. I travel through the dense forest then, at last, I arrive at the house down the road by following something that looks like an animal's trail.

A man twice my height is chopping a tree there. The origins of the noise that led me here seems to be the sound of wood-chopping.

He's wearing a simple black shirt and a pair of trousers. His short hair is completely gray and a scar runs over his left eye. He's probably pretty old, but his well trained muscles and his sharp eyes make him look like a veteran warrior.

He swings his axe down in a steady way. Though it's just mere wood-splitting, I think that his refined movements are beautiful. He would look better swinging a sword on a battlefield's front rather than merely cutting wood.

"……Who's there? Stop hiding and come out." (???) *(EDN:He speaks in a dialect, a "ho-gen", like an old man)*

He noticed me even though I'm hiding my presence? Those muscles aren't just there for show.

As I come out obediently since I don't really have a reason to hide, his threatening look settles down a little.

"Hmm, did you get lost or something?" (???)

"Nice to meet you, I am Sirius. I'm sorry to bother you, I accidentally found this place while taking a walk." (Sirius)

"…… What the hell are you saying? Are you from the demon race? I won't hold back if you're hostile." (???)

He turns his axe towards me like he's ready to hit me at any moment, I can feel bloodthirst coming from him. Wait a minute, no matter how suspicious I am, isn't he losing his temper a little too fast? I haven't done anything but talk.

"No no no, I'm normal… well, not really, but I'm a child of the human tribe. I'm not hostile at all."

I raise both of my hands and I put them in evidence to show that I'm not hostile and he cautiously lowers his axe. Then, without saying a thing, he resumes his wood chopping, disregarding me. It's rather refreshing to meet someone that blunt.

However, my coming here would all be pointless if I'm going to get ignored. Should I start the conversation from here?

"I'm sorry, but why do you live in such a place?" (Sirius)

"I don't want to converse with an aristocrat. I don't know how you found me, but we have nothing to talk about. Leave quickly and take your bodyguard with you." (???)

I got strongly rejected and spat on. Isn't this old man misunderstanding something? I get that he hates nobles, but I don't know who he is. First of all, I should make something clear.

"It seems like you're misunderstanding something, I just came here by chance, I wasn't looking for you. And I'm not an aristocrat, so I don't have any bodyguard. You probably already noticed that there is no one else around besides me since you've got sharp senses." (Sirius)

"… There is no one else, indeed. Boy, how did you get here? This isn't a place where a child can come by himself." (???)

"Because I have some special magic. I'll say it again, I found you by accident." (Sirius)

"Boy, do you know me?" (???)

"I don't know you, but I do think that you have a lot of skill." (Sirius)

This old man's atmosphere is different from Dee's. Yesterday's bandits are like trash when compared to this. Was my answer good? The old man finally stops being cautious of me.

"Hmm, you do seem different from those foolish nobles, boy." (???)

"Please don't compare me to them. It's unpleasant." (Sirius)

"Hoho, you said it. Well, you're a guest so, I'll serve you some tea. Come with me." (???)

Speaking of aristocrats, the only one I know is my father. That's why it's just like I said to the old-man, I don't want to be considered as one of them. Is he satisfied with this? The old man puts down his axe and invites me to his house.

It's a handmade log-house.

It's made of neatly processed wood, something similar to the stuff done in my previous world. There is a desk and a chair in the middle of the room, a carpet and futons made of demon fur and a stone oven. It's quite surprising since it seems that the old man made all of these by himself.

"Although I am an amateur, I try to use my strength and my extra time in various ways." (???)

"No, no, what you did here isn't something that an amatuer can do. Actually, don't you think you have a talent for this?" (Sirius)

"I don't like putting it as a talent. Oh well, I'm glad to be complimented anyway." (???)

I wasn't flattering him. To think that he made all of this by himself despite being isolated… This place is definitely more remote than my house. I wonder what reason he has for living here.

As I sit down on a chair while pondering on my questions, the old man prepares some tea and sits in a chair facing mine.

“Unfortunately, there are no other drinks for children. It’s fine to stop drinking it if this doesn’t suit your taste.” (???)

“Oh, I don’t mind.” (Sirius)

He pours a green liquid into a wooden cup for me. I don’t sense anything suspicious in it even after smelling it but… the smell seems familiar. The old man drinks it while gurgling so I take a breath and do the same even though it’s still steamy.

“Mmmh…Delicious.” (Sirius)

“Huh? You understand this taste?” (???)

“I understand it. The bitterness that stays in the throat and the heat that numbs the tongue. Isn’t it most suitable after a meal?” (Sirius)

It’s a little heavy, but there is no doubt. This is japanese tea, isn’t it? Because I drink it quickly, I nearly burn myself, but it has a nostalgic taste. The old man becomes more and more cheerful from seeing my reactions.

“Umu, you understand, don’t you boy? For a child to understand the deliciousness, you’re quite the smart fellow.” (???)

“Could you allow me to take some of this with me? I’d also like to know the raw ingredients if you don’t mind.” (Sirius)

“All right, I’ll give you some later.” (???)

Such a generous old man. It was worth coming here if only for this.

“No one else in this country gets it. Not understanding something like this… they’re just unworthy of it.” (???)

“Exactly. By the way, may I ask for your name?” (Sirius)

He lives alone in this kind of place. He could also be a criminal but, at least I know that he's not a person who'd try to poison me. I'm just someone who wants to learn various things, I never change my attitude no matter who I talk to.

"Lior. Are you familiar with the name?" (Lior)

"Lior? It heard it somewhere… hmm?" (Sirius)

If I remember correctly, it appeared in a book. The source: Alberto's travel diary.

The great swordsman who cuts everything down and turns it to ashes with his large sword of fire, said to come from the strongest family.

Capable of crushing a rock with one hit of his mighty sword which he even used to slay a dragon, according to the rumors.

All the people call him by the same name, that is,Goutsurugi Lior. *(TLN:Literally, "Lior, the strong sword", but it sounds lame so I'll keep it as Goutsurugi)*

"Could it be that, you're Goutsurugi Lior?" (Sirius)

"That's an old story. I'm just a retired old man now." (Lior)

Oh, I thought he seemed strong but, but I didn't think he was that high tier. I want to fight him by all means.

However, as powerful as he may be, I can't feel any will to fight from him. He released some killing intent when he thought I was a suspicious person but he went back to being a simple retired old man as soon as he figured that I was harmless. There might be a reason for that which involves his hate for aristocrats.

"You don't look like someone in his retirement days to me. If it's alright, can you tell me the reason behind your situation?" (Sirius)

"Hmph, you impudent boy. Well, I don't have anything else to do so I'll tell you but, it's a long story." (Lior)

He pours a second helping of tea into our respective cups and gradually starts talking.

“I always liked training. I trained and trained, I defeated various opponents and, before I knew it, I got labeled as the strongest. I also got labeled as master swordsman and strong flame but I didn’t really care for these trivial titles. However, after becoming the strongest, I couldn’t find an opponent to match me. Then an idea came to me like a flash, seeing how things were, I could just train someone and turn him into an opponent capable to face me, therefore I took some pupils. I easily managed to gather a lot of disciples at the center of the country after declaring openly that I was looking for one.” (Lior)

He’s the strongest after all. He’d likely be able to gather as many disciples as he wants even after advertising for just a moment.

“However, I’d say that most of the proposals I received were from aristocrats who wanted to show off as my pupils. Though the guys I taught were hungry for strength, they were just gutless idiots. Whenever a situation got tough, they’d run away, and if I didn’t go easy enough on them, they’d find it unacceptable and start whining. I have even been reported several times to the king, there was no end to those idiots’ proposals that I turned down. Since it couldn’t be helped, I decided to look by myself for suitable apprentices that I could eventually fight eye to eye with. I found a few fitting pupils but, they were all natives of the slums and commoners which made those dumb aristocrats make a commotion. From their point of view, I neglected them even though their position was better as nobles so they started whining again, yet it felt pretty good this time.

However, several of the nobles got jealous and envious and aimed for the right time when I was absent to surround and attack my disciples, preventing them of even swinging their swords. Though the pupils had some good skills, one of them ended up dying. In a fit of rage I looked for those nobles and chopped off the arms of the fools and humiliated them in front of the king and the other aristocrats. After that, things just got ridiculous so, I retired here, I didn’t want to get involved with the aristocrats anymore.” (Lior)

After finishing the long explanation, the old man quenches his thirst with some tea.

I now understand well the reason behind his hate for nobles and his lack of vigor.

However…. For now, I'll just give him my thoughts on that.

"So halfhearted!" (Sirius)

"Come again?" (Lior)

"You revenge against the nobles was too halfhearted! What you did to those aristocrats only hindered the country, you should have destroyed their family name and honor instead!" (Sirius)

"……hmm" (Lior)

"You were reported to the king several times before, right? This whole thing is just a consequence of that. You didn't try to justify yourself properly and you carelessly took risks instead, didn't you just get too excited?" (Sirius)

"Certainly so. However it would have been useless to justify myself because there were too many aristocrats blaming me, it's my first time being told that I acted halfheartedly." (Lior)

"A student shouldn't die before his teacher, that's why It's very important to improve the pupils' environment and make it suitable." (Sirius)

Though it's just my opinion, I think that creating an appropriate training environment is also the teacher's duty. The aristocrats are certainly bad, but the old-man who ignored them and looked down on them is bad as well. He didn't just have to guide his students, he also had to watch their back while they were still inexperienced. That applies even more when there are only a few of them.

As a former teacher, it should be alright for me to make a sermon or two, right?

"Hmph, that's difficult to hear. You're just a boy, how would you understand?" (Lior)

"I certainly am a child. Still, I'm aiming to become a teacher. You should admit your mistakes as the one standing on top." (Sirius)

“You want to try to become a teacher at your age? Though you have some wonderful ambition, you’re not likely to become one with your half-baked ideas.” (Lior)

“Then, maybe you should give it a try yourself?” (Sirius) *(TLN:if you didn’t get it, he’s insinuating that what he did in the past wasn’t worth being called teaching)*

I provoke him while letting out a small overpowering feeling. Even I think that I’m being too blunt but, the old-man squints his eyes and his mouth gets just slightly distorted.

“Good, I knew that you weren’t an ordinary fellow, you’re finally showing your true colors.” (Lior)

Somehow, there is a fight-like atmosphere and the old-man is fired up now, excellent.

Let’s have him show me the abilities of the one called the strongest.

After leaving the house, we’re now facing each other with wooden swords in our hands.

Putting aside the old-man’s sword, the other seem to be suited for children and probably belonged to the dead apprentice. Though it looks like it hasn’t been used in a long time, he probably cherishes it because it has been treated with great care. I think that it’s likely to break if it’s used for a serious fight, but the material of this wooden sword seems very strong and best suited for training nonetheless. The grandpa is beaming with confidence and not worrying at all.

Though he’s an old man, he’s happily doing practice swings to warm up. The opponent I’m facing this time is like a demon, I’m glad to be able to fight against such a person. I actually craved for meeting someone like that, so there is no way I’m letting this old man retire.

“If you hit me even once, it’s your win boy. But don’t worry, I’ll hold back.” (Lior)

“Why, thanks. But this handicap you’re giving me will be your downfall.” (Sirius)

“Cut it out, boy. Show me with actions, not words.” (Lior)

Well, now that my plan is a success, I don't need to badmouth him to provoke him anymore. However, I didn't plan the rest of this, what should I do?

I'll just try to make the first move for now.

I slowly walk toward him, then when I get two steps away from the old man, I focus all the power of my upper body to my feet and I dash at him. From a slow motion to a fast one, although he's surprised, the old man responds to the unexpected attack and moves over instantly. As expected of the one titled as the strongest, he easily managed to read and dodge my move and trajectory. While he dodges, I slash the wooden sword down from his shoulder with my right hand, and I go aside. I then take some distance and as we pass each other by the side, I notice that the left hand I hit him on is shaking.

"Say, what if this was actually a knife?" (Sirius)

"It would have been a fatal injury on a battlefield. My retirement made me grow dull, how shameful of me." (Lior)

He finally notices his negligence and smiles wryly while shaking his head. This should make things get serious. Looking at the old-man, a ferocious smile appears on his face and his muscles start inflating.

"I'm sorry. Yet, I'm thankful as well, boy. My heart almost got rotten! Wouaaaaah!" (Lior)

The shock wave made by his roar shakes all the trees around.

Hey wait, Isn't that too big of a change? He was just a lazy retired man a few minutes ago. Yet now, the strong pressure resulting from him just standing there is making all the demons and animals in the area run away in all directions.

This tension reminds me of the training with my teacher. I want to cry every time I recall the kumite in that hell, but I'll put that aside for now. The preparations are complete. The old man finally got serious, from here on we'll have a real fight.*(EDN: Kumite is one of the three main sections of Karate, similar to sparring.)*

“I’ve never seen this stance before. What school is it from?” (Lior)

The old-man is holding his sword vertically pointing upright, it’s quite similar to the style called Jigen-ryū from my previous life.

The Jigen-ryū style is said to allow one to cut anything with a single blow. I think that it really fits this old-man.

“It’s not from any school in particular, it’s self-taught.” (Sirius)

As for me, I’m hiding one hand behind my back and I’m holding my sword with the other, a peculiar stance that protects the body.

Though I was trained by teacher, she didn’t follow any school. However, she shined by nothing but her experience and changed her moves to suit each case. A style that changes depending on the situation. It’s a style that is quite convenient for me.

“Is that so? In that case, from here on, let’s go at it boy!” (Lior)

The old-man dashes at me by stepping only his tendons on the ground, and I activate my [Boost] in order to fast Guotsurugi.

Thus… a switch got turned on.

◆ ◆ ◆

— Lior —

Boring.

I always liked training and fighting, I kept getting stronger just because I liked it, and eventually, I became the strongest.

However, I also became empty.

Though there was no end to the people challenging me to get my title, they all sunk with a blow or two.

Too weak.

How long was it since my thirst for fighting had faded?

So boring.

Fire won't burn without any firewood.

And like the fire wood, I kept waiting for a meeting with a worthy opponent.

And then one day, I realised that instead of waiting for it I could just make it happen.

Training disciples and raising them to fight against me. That was way more significant than just waiting. Though I immediately found some recruits, I only gathered noble brats losers who didn't even know how to swing a sword. Even when there was some pupils that were somewhat better, they were removed by the other aristocrats' influence. Some people even tried to bribe me to give them a student title but I shut those guys up with a single blow.

I decided that I shouldn't wait for apprentices either and that I should look for some myself. I searched all over the world and kept looking for pupils in thirst for strenght. I was delighted when I finally gathered enough students. They got stronger and stronger every day. It was the first time I felt that happy besides when I fought.

However… the aristocrats destroyed all that.

I cut the right arm of the main culprits for revenge, but my mind didn't clear at all. Even simple seeing aristocrats felt unpleasant.

I left the country in despair and I retired in a secluded sea of trees. I built a house, I fought with some demons, and spent my everyday life in a calm and peaceful way. However, I couldn't fill the empty hole in my heart.

When the mind becomes weak, the body becomes weak as well. Even my favorite sword gradually started to feel heavy, I grew weaker because of the lack of any sense of danger.

And my empty days continued.

And then, I met a boy.

It was a confusing and nonsensical child.

Even experienced adventurers rarely set foot in this forest, yet he casually passed by here with a light attire like he was just going to the neighboring town. I thought he was a new variety of demon at first so I gave off some bloodthirst, then I thought he was some idiot noble who came to visit me. It's rare to meet someone who doesn't know me on this continent, I was quite interested in that boy who didn't recognize me even after seeing me, though he understood who I was after I revealed my name to him.

The boy was quite mature for his age and he had good taste in tea, too. It was my first time meeting someone after so long as well so, I became quite talkative.

However, I actually ended up getting preached. I noticed that he was provoking me and I answered to his provocation in order to educate that impertinent boy. I thought I could just wait for an attack, dodge it and hit the the kid lightly on his head, however, he was just leisurely walking for some reason. It was my first time seeing that kind of action.

I absentmindedly watched the boy leisurely approaching me then he suddenly appeared in front of me and got into my range. I almost fell down on the ground from the surprise and my heart was pounding strongly. If it was the old me, I would never have let him get this close. I was surprised by my weakness, but I managed to barely move away. I dodged that attack but the boy hit me at my side right after and then took some distance.

"Say, what if this was actually a knife?" (Sirius)

Those words made me angry. Not towards the boy but towards myself.

What on earth am I doing? This arrogance, it's the same as those fools' from the past. Though he didn't actually stab me, that blow woke me up. This fellow is not a simple child, he's a strong person worthy of being my opponent, I now understand that. I disappear and a blazing fire takes my stead, my body starts to pulse with heat.

This sensation…… I missed it.

I apologized to him, thanked him and we then took a fresh start. This boy…. no, this guy, it's someone I can get serious with. He doesn't belong to any school either, he's holding a stance that I've never seen before. He should join my school [Tsuyoshi Yabu Itto-Ryu]

"Tsuyoshi Yabu Itto style" "First technique: Heaven's strenght"

It's a basic technique that consist on raising the sword and then swinging it down with all one's strength

It's nothing but a simple downward string, but it can easily slice and cut iron once studied thoroughly. Though its trajectory is easy to read, it's difficult to avoid it because of its speed and the overpowering feeling given off by the full-out blow.

It can't be avoided because of its simplicity.

In fact, most of my opponents were beaten by this. But, what about this fellow? I step cautiously because of the fissures on the ground and I use heaven's strength…it's dodged. Moreover, he avoids it at the very last moment by merely shifting half of his body to the side. I leak out a smile over his ability to surely dodge that kind of strikes reflexively.

Immediately after, I aim for the opponent and slice at him with a downward swing, I'm using the "Ninoken Tsuyoshi-Shō". He twists his body and avoids this on as well. Though he tries to use the momentum of the evasion to attack me, I raise back my sword and use it to defend myself

Not only he avoided both of my attacks but now, my chances of losing are bigger since I also have to watch out for counterattacks.

My blood is boiling more than I thought. The opponent surely made me give him my best. The fellow is using the [Boost] magic to compensate for the difference in physical strength. Though I had an opponent who used that in the past, It's my first time seeing a complete use of [Boost]**.** No, this doesn't matter for now. *(TLN: The boost is generally used partially, like, on one hand or one arm)*

I'll go all out now and give the best I can.

"Eight Slashes Breath" "Rannoken-Chiyabu."

He blocks half of the slashes with his sword and he dodges the remaining ones.

I plunge mana in the sword and create an extensive shock wave, "Yabuno-kenshōha".

I use this chance to pass him by the side, I try to attack him but he moves back outside the reach of the impact. I swing down forward and he dodges by jumping backwards.

Oh…… It doesn't connect, none of my techniques connect.

Haha, splendid! I can't stop my heart from dancing. This is incredibly fun.

A competition using both power and skill, a fight to the extreme with both parties clashing at full strenght. Power is returning to my weakened body, and being able to sharpen my senses and use my techniques is so pleasant. The strong man I longed for for so long has appeared at last.

What Goutsurugi? What strongest? Isn't there someone clearly superior to me right here?

I want to fight with my beloved sword, not with some wooden one.

I don't want us to withdraw after one hit, I want us to fight until we attain a clear victory or defeat.

I want to put on my armor, I want to fight desperately with life and death at sake.

I want to keep fighting forever.

My revived heart spits out desires one after another, but this old body hits it's limit. My breath is ragged, and I am clearly on the defensive side. This body is far past its prime, but because I did not neglect my daily training, I should be able to fight a little longer. It seems to by the price to pay for the time I spent rotting away.

If only I had met him sooner… No, it's too late to say that isn't it?

He attempts a strong attack aimed at my neck but he stops, jumps backward and puts a lot of distance between us. Strange, he could have struck me with his sword using that momentum. As I establish a steady breath while questioning his actions, he also just stands there, exhaling deep breath and he raises a single finger.

"We're both at our limit. Let's put an end to this." (Sirius)

"…… All right" (Lior)

Is that so? Is this fellow at his limit?

Though his appearance didn't change, I can see that his breath is getting rough little by little and his arm is slightly shaking, showing that he's indeed at his limit. And I only noticed it just now, even his skill for concealing tiredness is wonderful.

The thing is that, if we keep fighting like this, I'll get exhausted and he'll win just from his tenacity. Nevertheless, he took some distance and declared that we're ending this. I'm really thankful. Then, I'll honor that graceful gesture.

I fix my disordered breath, I take a Heaven's Strength stance again and grasp the sword. All right, here I come. I will show him the strongest blow I can pull off in my current state.

The fellow accelerates at a dash in a frontal way without trying to pull any petty tricks. Though I surpas him in power, I don't know what will happen against this opponent whose movements I can't read. He uses his momentum from running and swings his sword as if he's scooping something up, while I just naively swing mine from the top to the bottom.

A crushing sound echoes throughout the area, and our wooden swords crumble to pieces. Could they not withstand our attacks any longer? Whether that's it or not, I just leak out a sigh and enjoy this time of supreme bliss.

But I was foolish. This fight… isn't over yet.

The moment I look at the pieces of wood flying about, the guy's foot catches my jaw.

Ha ha…..

There was no reason for the fight to end when the weapons broke.

I see his foot move slightly and at that moment, my consciousness fades away.

Chapter 11

The Discontent Teacher

"Hahh…. what a reckless old man." (Sirius)

He's twice stronger than I imagined. And what was with that eight consecutive slashes attack? It made me seriously wonder if I'm in some sort of manga setting. I managed to dodge the strikes but frankly, if it wasn't for my [Boost] spell, I would have been done for.

Moreover, his abilities were considerably reduced by his old age and negligence. I don't know what would have happened if he was still in his prime.

Yet, I managed to beat him in the weapon fight. The wooden sword was surely strong and hard to break, but if the same spot gets hit repeatedly, it naturally becomes fragile. After that, It's possible to break the sword if one aims and hits that same fragile spot at full strength. This feat was only possible because of my [Boost] and my eyesight which allowed me to avoid bullets in my previous life. At worst, if only my sword broke, I would have declared my defeat and given up. That old man is clearly a battle maniac. He kept laughing out loud while fighting and he genuinely had fun as he waved his sword around. He was pretty easy to read since emotion overcame him like that so I managed to catch him off guard when the weapons broke and I hit him in the jaw, knocking his lights out.

Since I kicked without holding back, it violently shook his brain, he probably won't be getting up for a while. That attack was at a level that would have surely killed an ordinary person.

Even so, it's as one would expect from the old-man titled as the strongest. Though not as much as him who's sleeping in a satisfied mood, I too am quite happy about being able to go all out after all this time. I'd like to have him as an opponent again but, I guess there would be some age-related issues. Anyway, I'll go take care of the old-man. I can't bear to leave him drenched in sweat outside .

“U….gh. He….. hehe…… AHAHAHA!” (Lior)

He suddenly begins to laugh out loud. Did I kick him too hard?

“So fun! It’s been such a long time since I had this kind of fight. I feel reborn.” (Lior)

As he says that, he springs up to his feet as if nothing had happened. No, wait, are you kidding me? Did he immediately recover after getting his brain shaken like that?

“Sorry, but I’d like you to tell me your name again.” (Lior)

“You’d think that calling me only boy would make you unable to remember. It’s Sirius.” (Sirius)

“No need for honorifics and stuff like that. It’s all right for you to call me as you like as well, Sirius. You beat me after all.” (Lior) *(TLN: He started calling him in a more respectful way)*

The old-man doesn’t stop laughing at all. He already accepted the situation, didn’t he?

“That was due to my surprise attack, right? I surely would have lost if I had used a frontal one.” (Sirius)

“It was due to nothing but my own carelessness. I’ll be eternally ashamed if we say that I didn’t lose.” (Lior)

“I understand. Then, it’s my win.” (Sirius)

“Indeed, it’s your win. But well, that was so fun. My techniques didn’t go through at all.” (Lior)

“Now is not the time to get excited, we should finish maintaining our bodies first. We’re both pretty worn-out, right?” (Sirius)

Never mind the old man, even I am sweaty and my clothes are split here and there even though I didn’t get any direct hit on me. We only grazed the clothes with our wooden

swords but our slashes ended up cutting them as we kept on fighting. Our physical and mental strength got drained as well.

“That’s right. For the time being, let’s get back to take a rest inside an- Waaaah!” (Lior)

As he enters the house, he goofily slips down, falls and knocks down the door.

That just goes to show that his foot was thoroughly damaged. I feel relieved to see him act like a proper human being.

We return to the house and, after taking care of our bodies, we start drinking tea while facing each other at both sides of a table.

“Hmmm…. Delicious.” (Sirius & Lior)

The old-man and me have almost the same age so, there is nothing strange about us using the same line after finishing a cup of tea.

“Fuuuu, such a pleasant fatigue. Well then, Sirius, first of all, I want to thank you.” (Lior)

The old-man bows down strongly like he’s going to prostrate himself. Though I somehow understand his motive, I still think he’s going too far.

“Raise your face. This whole thing allowed me to get some valuable experience so, I also want to express my gratitude.” (Sirius)

“Still, I kept longing for a strong man like you. If you hadn’t come, I would have faded away while rotting quietly. Therefore, I want to express my gratitude. Thank you!” (Lior)

His face radically changes from the bored look he had after we met earlier and it’s now beaming with a radiant smile. He looks ten years younger as well. It doesn’t feel bad to be thanked. Even though I intended to only fight the old-man, we ended up having a pleasant conversation.

“Putting the thanking aside, I have a favor to ask you. Would you mind fighting me again?” (Lior)

“You mean, right now?” (Sirius)

“Exactly… is what I want to say but, my body is at its limit. Besides, It would be impolite of me to face you in such a bad state.” (Lior)

“You think it would be alright in terms of age difference?” (Sirius)

“No problem with that! It won’t be troublesome for me to get back to my prime either because of this sense of fulfillment. Besides, you want to do it too, don’t you?” (Lior)

“…… You understand that?” (Sirius)

“I do. Though your fighting style is quite unusual, you used a lot of catching off guard, sneak attacks and things like that. Despite that, you crossed swords with me from the front, that just goes to show that you indeed wanted to train.” (Lior)

He seems to have thoroughly inspected me despite him fighting solely on instinct.

As the old-man said, my fighting style is oriented to melee, sneak attacks and the likes. In my previous life’s work, I used to sneak into the enemy’s camp by myself and perform my assassination, but I’d end up rampaging and destroying everything inside. Frankly, If anything happens I can just fire my [Magnum] at close range. However, there might be a situation where I can’t use neither magic nor surprise attacks. The fact is that I have to forge the skills necessary to fight confidently from the front.

I also know the enjoyment of training, though not as much as the old-man. All of that is the reason behind me fighting from the front with him.

“You get to train and I get to fight you. See? it’s a win-win. How is that?” (Lior)

“You already know the answer, right? I’m looking forward to our cooperation.” (Sirius)

“Umu. Then it’s a deal.” (Lior)

We exchange a firm handshake. Though it’s all good since I’ll be growing from my child state to adulthood, the old man will keep raising back after this. Additionally, since his

declined body strength will return, I think this is going to be an unimaginable penance for me.

“It’s a pleasure for me to be able to chase your back at my age. I’m looking forward to it, though I’m not likely to catch up no matter how much I try.” (Lior)

If it’s this old-man, he might actually do just that, and unexpectedly fast. I have a hunch that, at worst, he’ll get even stronger than when he was in his prime. I mean, this kind of battle maniacs get outrageous specs once they have a goal in sight, don’t they? I, too, can’t be careless. After getting Fia as a new friend, I was able to get a rival whom I can fight against on equal footing.

After that, while waiting for my strength to recover, I talked to the old-ma-…. Lior.

I explained my personal situation and I listened to Lior’s past story, which was really worthwhile. I showed him some magic on the way, but as I thought, my magic is too special and even Lior never saw anything like it, even though he’s an elder.

“I’d like to fight you with all of your magic someday. Just thinking about how I should fight makes me boil!” (Lior)

“You’re already sick, aren’t you?” (Sirius)

“And I’ll never recover, HaHaHaHa!” (Lior)

When we came back, I had him share some tea-leaves. Since Lior’s new discovery didn’t have a name, I named it Japanese Tea. I plan to visit frequently after this so I firmly mark the place on my handmade map. It should take me about one hour from here to my place if I go straight home, I guess?

“The next time you come, I’ll be back to being able to swing my love-blade to the limit.” (Lior) *(TLN: Literally “love-sword”)*

“Because of your age, try not to overwork yourself.” (Sirius)

“Screw that, I’m still on active service.” (Lior)

Lior’s love-blade is a huge sword as big as himself, I think it’s a hundred kilogram at the very least.

As I feel a shiver remembering that the old-man declared that he’s gonna swing that thing around, I leave Lior, and return to my home.

“Ah, welcome home, Sirius-sama~!” (Noel)

When I came back to the house, Noel, who was wiping the windows, greeted me by waving her hand. By the way, though there is glass in this world, it’s not transparent like in my previous life so, the windows are made out of a material gotten from a transparent kind of demons.

“I’m home, Noel. Did anything unusual come up?” (Sirius)

“Nothing in particular. Oh, now that you mention it, Dee-san said that he wanted to report something to you.” (Noel)

“Got it. I guess that, If it’s at this time, he called me to the warehouse, right?” (Sirius)

“Yes~.” (Noel) *(EDN: She speaks quite informally, for a maid.)*

The warehouse is a building on a corner of the courtyard. Therefore, since that’s where we repeat various experiments, Dee should be there too. I see off Noel as I head toward the entrance way, but the door opens before I get to reach out my hand to it and I’m greeted by Elena.

“Welcome home, Sirius-sama.” (Elena) *(TLN: She’s saying it more politely than Noel)*

“I’m home, Elena.” (Sirius)

Bowing gracefully, she checks me for injuries. Ah, this is bad. I forgot that my clothes were torn during the fight with Lior. I thought that Noel would point it out but, it seems that

she's used to my odd behavior. The eyes of Elena sharpen and she grips my shoulder as I break out in a cold sweat.

"So tattered! Are there any injuries?!"

"It-It's all right. Only my clothes were torn so I'm unhurt."

"Really? I'll confirm it as you change your clothes."

"No, I told you it's all right."

"I'll confirm it!"

"Yes…"

Although she's like a mother to me, being watched while changing my clothes is still mortifying. But she's genuinely worried about me rather than the clothes so it's hard to refuse. In the end, I didn't stop her and I change my clothes while being watched by Elena. Midway, I mutter"They became splendid.", thinking of my muscles.

When I finished changing my clothes and went back to the living room, Dee was waiting while holding a wooden container.

"Welcome home, Sirius-sama"

"I'm home, Dee. I heard you have something to tell me, what is it?"

"Ah, yes, look at this please."

"Oh, were you finally able to do it?"

Dee holds out a container filled up to the brim with water and with a white object sinking inside. I only taste lightly to assess it but there is no mistaking it.

"…How is it?"

“Good, It’s complete. This is just like I imagined it.”

“Thank goodness…”

The thing that Dee prepared is tofu. There is a bean similar to soy bean in this world and, as a result of my examination, I found out that it’s almost the same as the ones in my previous life. The bean already has some excessively long name but, since I call it soybean, it became like a rule to do so and all the others call it this way now.

Dee repeated a process of trial and error in the warehouse, trying to make various things with this. One of those things is this tofu, using my instructions, he finally managed to make it. Though I’m the one procuring the material and the knowledge, I still feel sorry for entrusting most of the actual making to Dee. Tofu is made by soaking the beans in water for a long time, boiling it in a certain way and blending it, among other things, it’s a lot of simple but troublesome work.

“I’m sorry, I always make you do the troublesome work.”

“Not at all. I learn from it and I enjoy it.”

“I see, then, please take care of me next time again.”

“Leave it to me.”

“Is this toufu? It’s a very soft thing, isn’t it?~”

Noel, who finished wiping the windows, gives her impression while poking the tofu. I guess that one wouldn’t normally think that hard beans could become like this. I only know how to make dishes such as this tofu because cooking was one of my hobbies in my previous life.

While touring the world for the war, I kept forcibly eating rations from food shortages and whatever else I found and I eventually became able to eat anything no matter how bad it is, as long as it’s not poisoned. However, wanting to eat something good apart from that, I

started cooking and, without noticing, it became a hobby and I acquired various knowledge about it.

“I wonder what it tastes like?” (Noel)

“Well… it’s not very tasty.” (Sirius)

“Huh? Sirius-sama, it’s complete, isn’t it?” (Noel)

“It is indeed. This is mostly used combined with other things rather than by itself. The food texture is quite unique but that’s the most important part of the dish.” (Sirius)

“Eeeeh, so cooking isn’t just about making delicious things. It’s actually pretty deep.” (Noel)

“Nevertheless, this is a relief. I’ll be able to complete what I planned to make today.” (Sirius)

“Haaah!? What do you mean, Sirius-sama?” (Noel)

“A new dish, huh…” (Dee)

“Oh. That’s because I went to the sea and I managed to catch this fellow here.” (Sirius)

The tension between the two goes up as they hear about the new dish. That’s because I let them taste every time I develop a dish that’s not from this world. Though there are some likes and dislikes, they mostly like the things I make so they’re tightly holding to their stomachs.

By the way, Noel’s favorites are mayonnaise and pudding, Dee’s are tempura and fried chicken. Elena’s favorite is French toast, it’s like a reminder of that time she ate it when I rescued her. I’m a little embarrassed.

Though the two of them are cheering all together, their expressions harden as soon as they see the thing I take out. I wonder if suddenly taking out dry seaweed is strange.

“What’s this black thing? It gives off a bad feeling.”

“This is a kind of grass that grows in the sea. It’s called kombu.” *(TLN: Kombu = Seaweed/kelp)*

I found it on the coast and I left it to dry there before crossing the continent, I collected it on my way back. The flavor should be good since it dried for about half a day.

“You want us to eat that?”

“Well, the thing is just like I imagined it. However, this time, I’ll use it to make a soup rather than eating it.” (*TLN: He doesn’t say soup but Dashi which can be made with seaweed)*

Though I immediately try to head to the kitchen to cook it, Elena stops me midway and starts preparing tea.

“Sirius-sama, shouldn’t you take a rest since you just came back?”

“hmm, is that so?”

“You guys should also go take a rest. Sirius-sama, I want to ask you for the reason behind your clothes getting torn.”

She’s smiling but she’s giving off a very intense presence. I want her to stop making that face because, frankly speaking, It’s scary.

Thus, I easily explain that I met Lior.

“Ehhh! You met THAT Goutsurugi?!”

“Is it that surprising?”

His strength was terrific but, he only looked like a retired old man visually.

“No no, I never met him but I can say for sure that’s he’s amazing. To the extent that he even appeared as the hero in books.” (Elena)

“He’s also called a living legend.” (Dee)

“I heard that, too. He’d charge at any enemy camp by himself and make them surrender in only a day. He seems to have innumerable heroic episodes.” (Elena)

“Could it be that you challenged— as if~, there is no way that’s true, right~?” (Noel)

“I understand all this well. That person was really strong. Honestly, it was a very close victory.” (Sirius)

“Ha… Ahaha. Though it sounds like a joke, I can believe this if it’s you.” (Noel)

Seriously, if they get surprised by each of my actions, there will be no end to this. Though that applies for Noel, Elena only nods with a consenting expression.

“So your clothes got torn because you fought against that Goutsurugi. However, Sirius-sama, please don’t overdo it.” (Elena)

“But I won’t get stronger without overdoing it.” (Sirius)

“Still, though I can overlook it to some degree, I’ll say this again and again. Please don’t ever overdo it.” (Elena)

“I understand…” (Sirius)

Though her words are kinda annoying, they come from pure worry about me. I guess she won’t back away even if I whine about it so the best thing to do is to do nod obediently. However, having her overlook my behavior is better but I can’t let Elena worry every time. I have to find a way to inform her of my safety, I’ll think about something.

“Nevertheless, it’s an amazing story to meet someone like the legendary Goutsurugi and a rare elf in such a short span of time.” (Noel)

“Even if you say so, I just met them by accident.” (Sirius)

“I want to meet them too. I don’t know about Goutsurugi-san but I heard that elves are beautiful. Sirius-sama, that person was a pretty woman, right? Could it be that you fell in love?” (Noel)

“That’s no good. Even is she’s a beauty and an elf, I have to meet her properly, I won’t permit this if I think that she’s not suited.” (Elena)

It’s hopeless, Elena’s eyes are just like those of a mother-in-law. Well, I can’t imagine her scolding or blaming Fia for omitting a step while cleaning. The other party is the one who fell in love…… I can’t say that. Though the kiss was just a form of gratitude, Elena would surely snap if she were to know about it.

“He said that they can’t meet for at least a decade, right? Then forget about the elf, today’s event is more important.” (Noel)

“Yes, then please be really careful.” (Elena)

“Got it. Well then, I guess it’s about time to go cooking. Dee, get me two pieces of tofu out of the warehouse. I’ll use it to cook.” (Sirius)

“I understand.” (Dee)

Now then, I’ll try to make some Yosenabe. *(TLN: A variety of Nabe, it appears a lot in manga)*

This world doesn’t have much seasonings nor does it have any good soup stock matching vegetables and meat. When I found the sea, I remembered the existence of kelp/kombu. I found something that had the same shape and atmosphere, I checked it for poison but there was none and so I’m cooking it as an experiment. *(TLN: He says Dashi again)*

First, I use a squeezed dry dishcloth to wipe off the dirt on the surface of it and I put it in a saucepan filled with water which I then simmer on a medium flame. Just before it starts

boiling, I take out the kelp and just like this, the soup is done. Then, I cut the vegetables and the meat that Dee prepared into a moderate size, I put the difficult to boil materials in the soup and I cook them together. I regulate the taste with salt and sugar since there is no soy sauce. After letting it simmer some more, the tastes of the materials start to leak out and so the yosenabe is now complete.

“Though the cooking method is easy, It looks delicious. However, I don’t know about the quantity per person.”

“This is a dish which isn’t actually supposed to be divided, rather, everyone has to eat from the same plate. I’ll explain when all members gather so let’s make dinner for now.”

I prepare a small table with Dee taking notes next to me, everyone is now encircling the pot. By the way, since there is no gas stove, I put up a fire magic tool below on a weak setting. Elena and Noel tilt their necks looking at the completed Nabe. *(TLN: Nabe = saucepan)*

“Is this Nabe? Errr… where did the black grass go?” (Noel)

“It contains the tofu from earlier too, doesn’t it? Are there any special manners to eat this?” (Elena)

“I did add some seaweed at the end and I sunk it in the bottom but, the taste should suit you, Noel. And there aren’t any particular manners to follow. You can do what you want as long as you use a ladle to scoop the soup in the small plates and that you eat directly from the pot to keep the flavor.” (Sirius)

“Directly? That’s……” (Elena)

Elena is making a bitter face. She probably thinks that it’s rude of an attendant to eat from the same pot as the master. However, that’s not my problem.

“Nabe is a cookery that warms both the body and the mind and it’s eaten in happy family circles. That’s a fitting dish for us, don’t you think?” (Sirius)

I grin as I take some vegetables directly from the pot and eat them. Fumu, though its flavor is plain and unsatisfying when compared to my previous life, it's still a delicious dish.

"Family…… a happy family circle huh? If it's for the family then, it can't be helped." (Elena)

"That's right, it's just as Sirius-sama said, this dish is for us. Thus, without any further delay…… HOT!" (Noel)

Though I prepared a spoon just in case, after I made chopsticks and started using them some time ago, all the members started doing the same. Elena and Dee soon became accustomed to it but Noel still lacks experience and loses her grip of the materials, making them fall into the soup which makes it splash back on her.

"You're still not accustomed to it, I'll scoop it in the small plate for you." (Dee)

"Uuh, thank you Dee" (Noel)

Dee follows-up without any delay. You guys just hurry up and start dating. I'll bless you with all my power.

"The compatibility of the soup and the tofu is very good. I'm probably going to eat a lot." (Elena)

"The tofu is also good for the body and has a diet effect." (Sirius)

"Is that true?! Dee, more tofu, please." (Noel)

"Got it." (Dee)

"Slow down, the pan won't run away. It's hot so eat carefully." (Sirius)

"Of course. But that won't be a problem after letting it cool that much…. Hot!" (Noel)

That's due to Noel having a tongue very sensitive to heat because of her being from the Cat subrace. Moreover, that doesn't go well with tofu which is cold on the surface but hot inside. This girl never falls short to my expectations. *(TLN: He's not praising her)*

After finishing the meal that satisfied me both mentally and physically, I helped Dee and Noel with their training. I call it training but I just helped Dee in making a new recipe for a dish and Noel in practicing the magic picturing that I taught her. I only give them an advice from time to time but that seems to be sufficient for them. Though it's easier and better for me not to have to work more than necessary, it still makes me feel kinda lonely as a former teacher. Because I'm merely advising these two, I can't say that they're my students.

When I heard Lior's story this morning, I thought it was sad but I also started throbbing from remembering my old self.

Aah… I want to get a disciple.

I go to sleep while harboring these hazy feelings.

Though i'm anxious, drowsiness comes easily thanks to my giving it my all against Lior.

After that, my daily work looked something like this.

Physical and magical training.

Studying of this world's knowledge.

Searching in the next continent.

Gathering money to get into school.

And, newly added, sham fights with Lior.

Every day goes by in this way and I keep growing up nicely.

And then, one year later.

A fateful encounter approaches not far from here.

Chapter 12

Fateful Meeting

I just thought of something.

Lior became a teacher to bring up an opponent who could fight him on equal footing, but why did I become a teacher in my previous life?

Well, officially, it was because my work became hard in terms of age and I decided to pass the torch to the next generation, but my real motive was a certain girl.

I suppose it was when I dismantled some illegal human trafficking network.

I sneaked in its facilities and crushed it, but there were many unidentified children inside. Thus, the organization I belonged to investigated them and they were either returned to their families or sent to orphanages, but there was a girl who didn't leave my side. Though I rescued the child right before she got experimented on, I looked like a hero to her at the time and she became abnormally attached to me. She didn't have any parents either, and since she didn't want to part from me no matter what, I decided to take care of her.

I couldn't just take her and go, so I entrusted her to a woman who I could trust and the girl was surprisingly obedient. When I took her, she seemed satisfied. Although we could hardly meet because I was busy with work, the girl was glad.

One day, she started to say that she wanted me to teach her about my work.

She wanted to help me with it. She said that she wished to become like the dreamy hero who saved her. My work wasn't actually such a pretty thing, I was a hitman. Even though I showed her the dirty part of it, the girl's will didn't change. At the sight of such a girl, I thought that I should retire and become a teacher since I had reached that age. She had the habit of calling me father sometimes but the girl became my first student.

Though I became a teacher for such a trivial reason, I gradually became happier as I witnessed the growth of the pupil. I grew to like teaching and that seems unchanged regardless of my reincarnation.

My motive for becoming a teacher was something along those lines.

And once again, a similar situation has approached.

It's been a year since I met Fia and Lior.

I turned six year old.

I finished my morning training, and I'm exploring the Adroad continent today.

Lately, I stopped searching for people from the sky, and my exploration is often done by walking around in the forest. I attack the incoming monsters, making them scatter in order to find edible plants but mainly to train as an adventurer.

"Oh, found a matsutake~ (Sirius)

It's not the matsutake of my previous life but rather a mushroom that resembles it. Though it has an official name, I call it a matsutake mushroom since I'm used to that. It's rare and delicious as it is so I wonder if I should add it in today's dinner.

As I harvest it with a pleased face, I start feeling hungry, partly from thinking about dinner. It's almost noon according to the sun. I sit on some random rock, and I take out a lunch box as I fold my hands. Since the other three make lunch at random, I wonder who it was today.

"So it's Elena today." (Sirius)

With multicolored side dishes inside, it's also packed with a vegetarian sandwich and meat, which is my favorite food. Since my growth advanced remarkably recently, so did my appetite. Last year, I'd have gotten a full stomach from half of this, but I can now wolf down the whole thing.

“Mhm, delicious. Oops, I have to call her.” (Sirius)

I gather a small amount of mana, and I fire it while aiming at Elena in the distance.

[A-yes…. Canis Major here. There is nothing abnormal in my current lunch. It’s also delicious today. Over] (Sirius)

That wasn’t a monologue just now.

It’s my newly developed spell, [Call]**.** When you aim it at a specific party, the spell delivers them the words by firing mana in a similar way to that of radio waves. As for the receiving side’s impression, it seems that they hear it in the form of a strange sensation that resounds directly in their brain. It’s certainly very convenient, like a cell phone, but only I can use it so it’s just a one-way traffic from here.

However, though I say radio waves, there is a high chance of it leaking to other people with a similar wavelength on its way, because it’s still mana after all. Therefore, I call myself by code names and make sure not to say the other party’s name.

Though there seems to be a wind spell that sends out the voice on the wind and fires it in the distance, [Call] is still in the testing stage. Even so, I use it regardless of that since receiving my voice gives a sense of security to Elena. I have to experiment it in a place crowded with people sometime and check its maximum range.

I finish my one-way report and resume my lunch. Mhmm, I wonder how can such an exquisite taste be brought out. I couldn’t reproduce the same flavor though I tried copying it several times. It seems my tastes are well known.

Having finished 80 percent of the lunch box, I move my [Search] spell because I feel a presence from the depths of the forest. Since I perceive something approaching at a high speed with the radar in my brain, I interrupt my meal and put my lunch box away as the the thing comes in sight.

With limbs as elegant as a horse's and an abnormally fat body, it's a strangely unbalanced beast that has two big, splendid horns. If I remember correctly, I believe it was called a Beonifang.

It appears that I'm his target, he sets in a ferocious body blow while pointing his two horns toward my direction.

"It's so dull… Oh?"

His speed is terrific, but the impressive frontal attack is easy to dodge. I slash at him as we pass each other, but the sword's cut is shallow, it's to the degree where it just left a small wound on his face. Because of his hard skin, it seems like it's impossible to kill him without strengthening my power.

As I think that, the monster returns and approaches once again so I avoid it. Earlier, I evaded horizontally, but I do it upward this time. I'll try to kill him quickly, before the monster starts struggling, by landing on his back rather than the ground.

"How's this!"

I stab the middle of his forehead near the brain with the mithril knife I got when I met Fia. As expected of mithril, the knife sinks with hardly any resistance, the monster trembles only for an instant and his gigantic body crumbles to the ground.

"This guy's legs are unusually splendid but are they tasty? Well, it should be alright to just roast them this time, right?"

This monster has a hard skin that can repel edged tools, it seems that he could face a group of intermediate adventurers as his opponents thanks to his strong body blows, but one can manage just fine by attacking his weak point with a sharp blade. In Lior's case, I think he would cut him right in half from the front and be done with it.

As I put away the roasted sirloin in my bag without treating the blood, I once again feel a presence from the depths of the forest. I activate [Search] nearly in sync and I get a signal of a similar monster. Although the monster is moving to another direction rather than here,

he's heading toward two presences which I felt before. It can't be what I think it is… I examine the reaction with a more detailed [Search] as I run to the monster. There is no mistaking it, that's a humanoid presence.

Avoiding the branches, or using them to rebound, I keep sprinting to soar through the forest. I proceed uneventfully without losing any speed at all, and I finally catch sight of the presences.

Right beside a tree broken by the monster's body blow, there are two fallen and exhausted children. Aiming at those children, the Beonifang pushes his foot off the ground right before rushing forward.

There is only one thing to do.

"Dropkiiiick!"

I dive with a stable strength, and I hammer down with both feet on the side of the monster's face using a kick that would put a pro wrestler to shame. Since [Boost] adds to it, the monster is blown away horizontally and mows down several trees as he goes rolling. I think that wasn't enough to defeat him, so I keep chase.

" [Magnum] "

I accurately deliver the decisive blow by shooting the bullet in the rolling monster's head. Although the head exploded, from what I see, It appears to have been exploded by the kick… or so I think. But, what's with this? Did the power of the gun magic grow stronger? I feel like it's stronger than the main family. *(TLN:A japanese expression, he's basically saying it's overpowered)*

I hold that thought back, other monsters might gather because of the blood's smell, have to get this over with it seems.

The two children who collapsed are beastkins, a boy and a girl.

Their age is about the same as mine, their hair color is silver, they have bushy looking straight tails and wolf-like ears. The girl seems to be older and their looks are similar so I wonder, are they siblings?

However, the pair's attire is bad. They have a piece of cloth that only hides the essential parts of their thinned skinny bodies which are full of scars and bruises. The most worrying things are the rustic metallic collars around their necks. Their size is way too big and it's not the kind of accessory that a child would put on at all.

The boy is unconscious, but the girl opens her eyes and faces this way with a blank look of surprise. As I suspect that her gaze is directed to me, the girl pulls herself together while glaring and protecting the boy with her hand.

"- I... pro-... er-!"

Has her throat been damaged? Her voice is cracked and I can't hear it properly.

I've seen worn-out people like that in my previous life. Nobody cares for them, they live in the few lawless areas without the country's blessing, slaves. Without any human rights and the like, all those slaves who were treated like consumable goods and discarded had dead eyes.

However, this girl is different. She's in a situation where she's worn-out and can't fully move her body yet despite that, her eyes show a strong determination.

I..... protect..... little brother.

That was the voice that I managed to pick up from the girl by strengthening my hearing.

As I approach step by step, she tries to escape at the same pace but her body seems to not be listening. One more step. Her body is shaking, she's completely frightened by me but she doesn't avert her eyes nor does she separate her hand from her brother. I take another

step, the girl is under my eyes. My getting closer while concealing my hand, is that what's scaring her?

Even so… her eyes aren't dead.

I bend a little to match her line of sight and I put my hand on the girl's head while talking slowly.

"It's alright. I am not your enemy."

I tell her the same words I told the girl from my past who started it all.

Right now, the girl is in a state where she sees enemies everywhere, so I first have to relieve her by making her understand that I won't harm her at all.

"You're protecting your younger brother, aren't you? You did your best. I'll help you so please take it easy now."

I pat her ruffled hair affectionately. With the girl from my past, I messed it up by doing it in a rough manner, but this time, I try to do it in the same way Elena does it for me. I think it worked, the girl's vigilance fades away and she simultaneously falls unconscious, shedding a trickle of tears.

Good grief, I still don't know these children's true colors but this turn of events is weird.

Children being chased by this kind of monsters isn't an uncommon thing in this world, no one would blame me even if I leave them like that. Rather, it would become troublesome if I don't leave them. I am still six year old and there is Elena & co too, thinking about the future, we can't afford to support two more people.

However, I said that I'd help, they have dog ears but I can't pretend having picked them up like pets, can I? What would Elena say about that?

As I worry, the surrounding presences increase, being lured by the blood. There is no more time so it can't be helped.

“For the time being… hold!”

Tying the two with [String] and carrying them, I fly away from the place.

“… And so, I came to borrow you wisdom, old-man. Please do something.”

I changed location to Lior’s home.

Lior gave me a puzzled look when I came over carrying the two, but he didn’t say anything in particular and prepared a bed. I layed the two on the prepared bed and Immediately got to explaining the circumstances. I consulted him while I was at it since he is an elder.

“What’s with that? So irresponsible. Even if you ask me to do something, you’re the one who picked them up.”

Figured as much~. Well, I’ve already decided what to do about it anyway.

“Even without me having to tell you, didn’t you already make your decision? What the heck are you hesitating about?”

“Nothing, it’s just Elena…”

“Hahahahaha! The strong man who took me down is frightened by one of his attendants”

“Shut up, Elena is scary.”

It’s a fear that only relatives know. My old self didn’t know it, but that retired old-man wouldn’t know it either.

I suppose it’s clear from the flow of the chat, but I made the decision to go back home with these two. I might end up even quarreling with Elena, but I have no alternative to that other than abandoning these fellows.

“Though It didn’t really bother me, why did you bring them to my place? You simply could have gone directly to your home.”

“I sincerely just wanted to borrow your wisdom. But first I want to ask you, are these two slaves?”

They’re ragged all over and they have those strange collars too. Although I’m almost sure that they’re slaves, I want to hear the opinion of Lior who traveled the world.

“They’re slaves, no doubt about it. That collar is the most conclusive evidence.”

“As I thought. Does this collar have any effects other than its looks? Though I can feel a little mana from it.”

“It’s a tool called [Subjugation collar] , when a contractor equips it to someone, he takes hold of his life. If the contractor so wishes, It can cause that someone’s body an acute pain, and even if he runs away, the collar keeps emitting mana to transmit his position. To make things worse, that emitted mana comes from the equipped person. As the mana lessen, the person gets gradually exhausted until she eventually dies.”

“If it’s true then it will be a problem if we don’t remove it as soon as possible.”

“That’s the thing, it seems like it can’t be removed without the contractor’s key. Moreover, breaking it physically can harm the equipped person which is troublesome in various ways.”

Looking properly, I see a keyhole on a part of the collar. It’s nothing complex, just a typical lock made to simply insert a key, however, the mana of the collar is pouring out from there. Is this location being transmitted to the contractor right now?

“From what I heard, there is a complex magic formation drawn inside the keyhole, this seems to be an intermediate rank collar. Since it takes a lot of time and effort to make, it’s quite expensive.” (Lior)

“Doesn’t matter if it’s expensive, I don’t like these kind of things. But is there a way to take it off by breaking it?” (Sirius)

“Mhm, maybe I can take the risk and try to slice it off with my sword?” (Lior)

“Though I believe in your skill with your weapon, let’s leave that as a last resort. Hold on for now, I want to try out something.” (Sirius)

“Oho? I wonder what you’re gonna pull off this time.” (Lior)

Setting aside the excited old-man standing behind me, should I try with the boy first?

I hold my hand on top of the collar and activate [Scan] , a new spell.

This spell passes mana through the target, it’s an investigation spell that depicts the object inside the brain. In my previous life’s terms, it’s x-ray imaging. If [Search] is suited for wide-ranged exploration, [Scan] is intended to enhance the accuracy by narrowing the general target to the minimum.

The drawback is that it can’t depict it in detail if it’s not at a hand’s distance. I experimented it with magic tools and found that it’s harmless, I also confirmed its safety toward humans by asking Dee to cooperate with his permission.

Grasping the internal structure of the collar, I redirect the [Scan] to focus it on the magical formation. This modified [Scan] doesn’t show the internal structure of the object but only shows the inner structure of the mana. Though I don’t understand the meaning of the effects drawn on the magic formation, I can see the source of the mana. If it’s as Lior said, then this collar should have four abilities.

Giving acute pain, absorbing mana, emitting mana, and harming the contracted when breaking.

As expected, looking at the mana formation, four cores are reflected. Among those, two are turned on, I guess that’s the mana absorption and emission. If I somehow deal with the other two, I might be good to go.

I extend two thin [String] from my left hand, I intrude them from the keyhole and direct them toward the magic formation. Holding the mana, I whirle it around all over to cover the circumference of the two problematic cores. Confirming that the two are enclosed without a gap, I grip my mithril knife in my right hand and draw it close to the collar.

“Please forgive me if I fail.” (Sirius)

I converge the [String] to constrict the cores and crush them, at the same time, I slice the collar with the knife. The collar makes a thick *cling* sound and slowly rolls to my feet. As Lior tenses up, I put my hand on the boy’s face.

“….Breathing confirmed. He’s alive.” (Sirius)

“Few…… thank goodness~” (Lior)

Though it was almost gambling, it seems to have succeeded.

“You’re amazing as usual. The fellows who broke their collars before ended up bleeding from their whole bodies and dying.” (Lior)

“If you know those kind of results, don’t go trying to slice it with your sword!” (Sirius)

“I thought that maybe I could slice it while aiming at the magic formation, hahahaha!” (Lior)

Lior started laughing out loud without any hint of shame. I understand his reasoning but his attitude is pissing me off, however, there are wounded people before me so I don’t voice my thoughts.

I follow by breaking the girl’s collar and examining it, but it’s just junk that doesn’t emit anything now since it’s not absorbing its target’s mana. Knowing its magic formation in detail might be useful for something, I wonder if I should take it home.

“Well then, now that I removed their collars, what’s gonna happen to these two?” (Sirius)

“A collar is a slave’s identification. Since there should be nothing that can remove it except if the master opens it, you can think of them as civilians.” (Lior)

“How does one become a slave to in the first place? I could understand if they were criminals, but these two are too young to be criminals.” (Sirius)

“Normally, criminals are the ones made to fall into slavery, but These two were definitely kidnapped. Because their species is rare around here.” (Lior)

“Rare huh, do you know it?” (Sirius)

“This silvery hair and wolf tail…. they’re probably from the silver-wolf tribe.” (Lior)

The silver-wolf tribe.

They have a silver wolf’s ears and tail and they are one of the numerous beastkin tribes. Their total population is small, and their combat efficiency is generally high, it’s a unique tribe that lives deep in the forest. Though they also have a lot of rough and short-tempered people among them, It seems to be a race that thinks about its companions and cherishes the bond between the tribe and the family.

And that’s it, the source is the all-purpose Alberto’s travel diary.

“It doesn’t matter if they are rare or whatnot. These two aside, I’m the one with a problem here.” (Sirius)

What should I tell Elena?

[I want to keep it, I want to keep it! I want to keep this slave~!] Should I throw a childish tantrum? No, not gonna happen.

“At worst I can take care of them.” (Lior)

“Though I appreciate the sentiment, this is my issue.” (Sirius)

I personally decided to pick up these fellows. That’s enough, I need to steel myself.

I trigger [Call] and aim at Elena, thinking about what I should say.

[Hmmm….. North Star here. I’m coming back now because I picked up two children due to certain circumstances. Please prepare a bed in the guest room, over.)” (Sirius)

I report what I have to say and take a deep breath. Since I can't see the other party's response, this one-way phone calling is scary. I want to improve it somehow.

"Well then, maybe I should hurry back home. Old-man, do you have big bags or something like that?" (Sirius)

"I do indeed, but what are you going to put there?" (Lior)

"I want to put the pair there. It's a wild movement prevention and it will block some of the wind pressure too." (Sirius)

"I see. Here, you can have these." (Lior)

"Thank you. I'll do this in return" (Sirius)

I push what little remains of the lunch box into the old-man's mouth. It's a very rude move, but this delicious dish is justice. The fact is that the stuffed by force old-man is smiling.

"You're so lucky to have an attendant whose cooking is this delicious. Well, you make delicious meals as well. Won't you make me some next time?" (Lior)

Since I've been in his care here several times, I occasionally cook a meal so that we can eat it together.

"I'm not your attendant old-man, but I'll do it if I feel like it." (Sirius)

Holding a bag, in which the two are wrapped up, under each arm, I rush home thinking that I look like a kidnapper.

◆ ◆ ◆

— Noel —

My name is Noel.

I'm one of the lovely attendants who serve master Sirius-sama. Because Sirius-sama is still a six-years-old child, we support him-..... is what I want to say, but Sirius-sama is so amazing that he doesn't really need support.

Using magic at merely three years old, he now keeps developing new spells and has the ability to have a match with Dee who's an adventurer and win. Furthermore, he holds knowledge far beyond ours and he makes the best use of it everyday just for our sake, he's a man of great ability.

On top of that, he's a great cook. He created various dishes never seen before and we're delighted whenever he introduces one. Especially so for the hmm..mayonnez and pouding which were revolutions. The first time I tasted it I was stunned for a while wondering how can such a delicious dish be. I feel happy whenever I recall it..... oops! I'm digressing.

However, that Sirius-sama's attribute is colorless. The attribute of the misfortune which is ridiculed as useless by the world. Though I don't know who came up with that idea, I think that person was mistaken because it's definitely not useless. On the contrary, we were shown that we're the more incompetent ones.

He's such a flawless person, but right now, he's scratching the back of his head with a very nervous face. It's my first time seeing Sirius-sama this flustered. It's so cute~ unlike his usual manliness.

This is the guest room and there are two beastkins laid on the bed. How did it turn out like this? Well, it was this afternoon.

When I finished eating my lunch, I was asked to clean the guest room by Elena-san. I quickly finished cleaning and Sirius-sama came back home looking for Elena-san in order to report to her.

I headed to the entry hall while thinking that he had come back early today, he had been holding two big bags as well. At the time, I had thought that maybe the contents of the bags were some new ingredients. I tried asking about the contents of the bags while a little excited, but he avoided the question and didn't answer. When Elena-san and Dee-san came toward the guest room, Sirius-sama made up his mind and took out the contents of the bags.

"What the…" (Noel)

Dee-san and I froze still. Why ragged children? And they were two as well. Only Elena-san was unfazed, when she confirmed the children's state, she hurled instructions at us.

"Dee, bring some medicines and hot water. Noel, bring a change of clothes for two people." (Elena)

"Ah, Yes." (Noel)

"Yes." (Dee)

"Sirius-sama, since I'll ask for the reason later, put the two people on the bed for now." (Elena)

"I understand." (Sirius)

And like that, each one of use filed his role and the basic medical treatment of the two soon came to an end.

Though he still has a nervous expression, Sirius-sama starts telling us about the reason for this. Long story short, he found the two being attacked by a monster while strolling in the forest and he defeated that monster to protect them. Which one did you kidnap first? Though that thought crossed my mind, Sirius-sama isn't that kind of person. I'm a beastkin yet he doesn't discriminate against me and he's such a great person that he became friends with elf-san and Goutsurugi-san.

However, these children's attire, I'm familiar with it.

“Apparently, these two people are slaves.” (Sirius)

Its only natural that I’m familiar with it. Because even I was a slave.

Though I was saved before the worst happened, these children might have been made to experience worse things than me. However, what’s going on? Doesn’t it require a collar to be a slave?

“I broke their collars, but I thought that I should treat them because their injuries were too severe and so I brought them along.” (Sirius)

“””You broke the collars?!””” (Elena & Noel & Dee)

What does that mean?! Breaking that collar should be lethal. I’ve seen it happen over and over again. Since we’re too surprised, he tells us the destruction method.

Yes, we learned how absolutely impossible it is for us to do it.

“I understand your motives. At any rate, we’ll let them sleep until they wake up.” (Elena)

“Please do. I’ll go prepare a meal for the weakened pair.” (Sirius)

“Noel, can I rely on you to wait-and-see, please? Because they’ll be less vigilant if they see you, a beastkin, when they wake up.” (Elena)

“Yes, Of course!” (Noel)

“Sirius-sama, let me help you.” (Dee)

“No, Dee, you must stay here with Noel to act as a liaison in case something happens.” (Sirius)

“I understand.” (Dee)

When Sirius-sama and Elena-san leave the room, it suddenly becomes quiet. Dee-san is not a talkative person, and I don’t feel like telling a useless story. I put a chair besides the

bed and I seat in a position from which I can see the faces of both of the two. Is Dee restraining himself? He's sitting at a slightly distant position.

I keep silently looking at the faces of the two for a while.

Nevertheless, they're in a really bad condition. They have scars from being whipped, bruises from being forcibly tied up and and many fresh wounds. I too received that treatment in the past, my body still shivers whenever I recall that.

Though my dignity as a woman wasn't scathed to avoid reducing my selling price, it still was a terrible time. If I hadn't been saved by Aria-sama that time, how would I have ended up?

Scary… I'm very happy now, so why am I trembling so much despite that?

"Noel." (Dee)

Dee comes and taps my shoulder. Though he has his usual expressionless face, I can see that he's worried for me. Since he knows my past, I'm sure he wants to tell me to not think too much about it.

"I'm all right." (Noel)

"… okay." (Dee)

That's right, I'm different now. My wounds and bruises have already disappeared, and I'm happy from being surrounded by everyone, aren't I? Let's think about these children for now. Well then, what should I tell them when then wake up?

It's all right, you're safe now… that's too common, right?

Snap outof it you scum! … that's the wording that Sirius-sama used before, but it feels wrong somehow.

You guys are lucky… but I can't just suddenly say that.

However, I really do think that these children are lucky. Their becoming slaves surely was unfortunate, but they were saved by Sirius-sama. If it's them, they can spend their life smiling much like I am now.

But Aria-sama and Sirius-sama really are mother and son. They both saved beastkin slaves.

We observe attentively the state of the two While having Dee-san make tea. I notice that it's time to prepare for dinner, but I don't see any changes in the two. I think that it's alright since they're breathing and I suspect that they might wake up soon.

As I wonder if I should report to Sirius-sama, someone knock at the door.

"Hey, It's me. Open." (Sirius)

Sirius-sama came just at the right time. When Dee-san opens the door, a delicious smell fills the room. In addition, Sirius-sama's hand is holding a pan, the smell seems to come from there. Aaah, it's mouth-watering~.

"… Want to taste it?" (Sirius)

"Isn't this the two's share?" (Noel)

"I made a little too much so it's alright. However, it's made for the weakened ones therefore I thinned out the flavor." (Sirius)

"Then, I'll accept your kind offer." (Noel)

Sirius-sama saw right through me. I take thin light-brown soup without any ingredients inside and pour it in a cup. Yes…. the taste certainly is light~. However, the non persistent rich smell pleases the nose and above all, the flavor is gentle. It slowly spreads in the stomach and pleases the spirit…… something like that.

"Sirius-sama, please teach me the recipe" (Dee)

Cooking also runs in Dee-san's blood so there is no way he wouldn't clamour. This certainly is the best for a weakened person. I'll have him teach me too afterwards.

“…… aaa…… uuu” (Girl child)

“Ah!?” (Noel)

While we’re complimenting the soup, the girl wakes up. Was she lured by the smell?

Anyway, the beginning is essential so I have to greet her gently. It’s natural to be frightened when waking up to a stranger, mhm.

Calm down, don’t panic, you only have to say the words you thought of a little while ago. Easy as pie.

“Hmmm… You alright? You’re really lucky, aren’t you? You scum!” (Noel)

Huh? Did I mix it up?

Chapter 13

You Were Selected

“Umm…okay? You lucky trash!” (Noel)

“-!?” (Sirius)

Hey now, those are your first words after they wake up? I fear the confusion Noel caused, as the initial impression is crucial to clear up any tension.

However, where did the word trash suddenly come from?

“…what the hell are you saying” (Sirius)

“A slip of the tongue! Just now, they looked so messy, I confused them with trash!” (Noel)

“-!?” (Young Girl)

“Listen, calm down and tend to the kid” (Sirius)

With you panicking, the kid won’t settle down. As Dee and I withdrew, Noel clumsily begins to talk while gesturing.

“Ah, uh…sorry. Umm…are you okay?” (Noel)

“A-u!?” (Young Girl)

A little surprised to be talked to, the girl inspects her surroundings frantically searching for something. Seeing the boy next to her, her expression softens a little.

“Younger brother yes? He's safe too. Are you okay? Is there anything you need?” (Noel)

“Aaa…uuu---” (Young Girl)

Noel confirms things one at a time, first calming the girl down and then assuring their safety.

“Is this child unable to speak?” (Noel)

“I only recently rescued her. I think it’s only inflammation, so I believe she should get better.” (Sirius)

With the two nearby, I invoke “SCAN”.

Along with inflamed and festering wounds covering their bodies, they are plagued with malnutrition and severe dehydration. Even though the inflammation won't last long, I decided to heal the girl's throat. Although troublesome, this isn't the time to worry about that.

Understandibly nervous, I left it to Noel until the girl calmed down.

“Hey look, I don't have a collar right? This companion of mine won’t hurt you, okay?” (Noel)

“…a!?” (Young Girl)

The girl was surprised while touching her neck; she noticed the slave collar was missing. The boy on the other hand looked confused.

“Ah, you noticed? You can be relieved because the collar was removed.” (Noel)

“A…u?” (Young Girl)

“Under normal circumstances it would have been impossible, but thanks to master it did not result in a failure so it's all good. Oh? I get it, you're hungry right? We've prepared some warm soup that I know is delicious.” (Noel)

“!?…uu” (Young Girl)

The girl who cried tears of joy after hearing that her collar was removed, reacted to the word soup. However, the boy lying down shook his head. Noel appeared to be considering their reactions.

“I see, the young brother is hesitant. Well, shall we talk then?” (Noel)

Wiping tears away with a handkerchief, the girl slowly nodded. Noel’s straightforward nature had helped to lower their guards.

“My name is Noel. Can you tell me your name?” (Noel)

“…no” (Young Girl)

“Sorry, your voice is a little too strained huh. Then letters? Can you write them? Um…” (Noel)

Noel looks toward Dee and I for help. But, considering Noel’s nature, she isn’t the type to give up so quickly. With great trouble Noel returns her attention to the girl.

“Jeez, Dee calls Noel. Then Noel’s gaze shifts to me.” (Sirius)

“I'm sorry.” (Noel)

“Got it. Um, this man is our master, Sirius. Do you remember him helping you?” (Noel)

“…mmm” (Young Girl)

Still wary, she answers with a nod. As Dee quietly leaves the room, I calmly approach Noel.

“I'll introduce myself again. I am Sirius. As Noel's master, I will protect you.” (Sirius)

“…?” (Young Girl)

“I want to understand your situation. However, you can't talk right? First, I want to heal your throat. But how to do it, I wonder.” (Sirius)

“Sirius-sama is a very tender-hearted master, so it’s okay. Heck, he’s not even angry from something like this” (Noel)

I rustle Noel's hair. She understands that this gesture is to calm the young girl. Even with Noel's poker-face and reckless greeting earlier, the girl nodded.

“Thanks, Well then, let me touch your throat. You'll feel a little heat but the pain will quickly go away” (Sirius)

“y….yes” (Young Girl)

Though a little suspicious, the girl exposes herself. Thanks to that, I was able to see various pitiful chafing scars.

Let's heal those too. Placing my hand on her head, I pour in magic power for an instant.

“Gaaaa!” (Young Boy)

“-!” (Sirius)

Suddenly the boy shot up and bit my arm.

“Sirius-sama!?” (Noel)

“Wait!” (Sirius)

As Noel pins the boy down, the magic doesn't disperse as my concentration is maintained. Even though his jaw is weak, his fully grown canines are a little painful.

“ii--aa!!” (Young Girl)

“By talking with master, you're delaying treatment” (Noel)

Because of the girl trying to stop the boy, the healing isn't stabilizing. The boy is also desperate. It's difficult for the wounded boy to think rationally.

“Uuuu!” (Young Boy)

“The timing is a little difficult huh” (Sirius)

“wah wah, Sirius-chama, blood is…” (Noel)

A little blood was coming from where the canines had penetrated. The pain continued, however I can endure it.

“You, if you don't move, I'm going to pet you” (Sirius)

“…?” (Young Boy)

“That's right. By acting indifferent, I'll calm him down” (Sirius)

Elena was clearly in turmoil while observing the unpleasant situation. The boy persisted relentlessly.

After the Girl calmly stroked the boy's body for a few minutes, he gradually released his bite.

“Sister, why should I stop!?” (Young Boy)

“Nnn…” (Young Girl)

“I don't like it! I can't believe it. Hey, take your hands off my sister!” (Young Boy)

Trying to attack once again, he's stopped by his sister's hands.

Unlike his sister, his rebellious spirit appears to be strong and considering their history of slavery this makes sense.

After the younger brother was soothed for a few minutes, the treatment was completed so I withdrew my hand.

“…Okay. Any time now is good. Say something” (Sirius)

“Stop it, that's unreasonable for my sister! Because of them my sister isn't able to speak!” (Young Boy)

“Your throat should be healed. Try and use your voice.” (Sirius)

While the boy ranted, I persisted anyways. The Girl, baffled, sucked in her breath.

“….re, usu?” (Young Girl)

“Sister!?” (Young Boy)

“reus…Reus. You hear my voice?” (Young Girl)

“I hear! I hear you Sister!” (Reus)

“*sniffle*, That's great” (Noel)

Tears begin to form on Noel’s face as the siblings embrace each other, Noel brings a handkerchief to her tear filled eyes. Hold on now, there are things to do before you cry.

“Want soup?” (Sirius)

“That's right! Prepare at once” (Noel)

So it doesn't get cold, I want them to eat quickly.

Reaching to the bottom of the container, Noel presented two bowls of soup to them with a smiling face.

“The younger brother has come to his senses, so I'm alright now right? Right, warm soup to eat” (Sirius)

“Mmm…that's it, it's a trick! It's incredibly disgusting and you're going to laugh at us!” (Reus)

“That's not the case. Look…yea, it's tasty” (Sirius)

Unthinkably, the boy falsely accuses me again despite seeing me eat in front of him. Saying nothing at the scene in front of her, Noel holds out the bowls to them with a slightly serious face.

“I think you two suffered a lot. However, Sirius-chama tried his hardest for your sake, right?” (Noel)

“Umm…why do this for us?” (Young Girl)

“Maybe you question why Sirius-sama intervened? I want you to listen to Sirius-sama’s explanation, but right now I want you to eat” (Noel)

“That's right, eat right away. It's getting cold” (Sirius)

With my encouragement, the girl finally put some in her mouth.

“…delicious” (Young Girl)

“Oh, is that true sister? It's not something like poison?” (Reus)

“It's very delicious. Warm, and for the first time…” (Young Girl)

Timidly raising the bowl to his mouth, large tears started flowing.

“Damn…you little. What the heck…*hick*, shit” (Reus)

“Delicious…really…u, uuu!” (Young Girl)

It seems he's completely thrown off his shackles.

Ignoring their appearance and the shame of it, the two cried in a loud voice.

Crying with all their strength and unable to calm down, those present came to understand their harmlessness.

Crying without holding back is a good way to let go of heavy burdens.

“Rely on us in the future” (Sirius)

“Yes, please leave it to us” (Noel)

Trusting the two, I quietly left the room.

Upon leaving the room, I greet Elena. She takes my hand smiling gently.

“Good work. But don't over-do it. If it wasn't a kid's strength, you'd be seriously injured.” (Elena)

“As you said, but it isn’t so serious an injury for you to be worried.” (Sirius)

“Indeed. Let's hurry up and apply treatment. I don't want to sound cynical, but thinking about hygiene I'm worried about infection.” (Elena)

“It's okay, the magic filtered any impurities in the blood. After clotting, treatment won't be needed.” (Sirius)

“As expected. But let's wrap it in bandages just in case.” (Elena)

Using my hands, the bandages were wrapped quickly. Though overprotective as ever, Elena looked happy.

“Sorry Elena. I grabbed these two without consulting anyone.” (Sirius)

“Apologies are not necessary. Rather this is a good thing. Sirius-sama really is Aria-sama's child.” (Elena)

“Mother's?” (Sirius)

“That's right. The situation was different, but Aria picked up Noel in a similar manner. Their look and spirit were just like this.” (Elena)

Elena laughs happily. Without knowing I'd acted the same way as mother. I should say I'm glad, yet it feels creepy.

“Sirius-sama, what do you intend to do with the two?” (Elena)

“What do I intend…huh. The family right now can easily support two more people-…” (Sirius)

“Sirius-sama” (Elena)

Interrupting me, Elena put her hands on my shoulders with a serious face.

“Don't mind us or the household, please tell us your honest feelings. We're servants therefore we'll do what you want.” (Elena)

“Even if I'm unreasonable?” (Sirius)

“Even then. However, if you're being unreasonable we'll say something.” (Elena)

Jeez, these people are hard for me to understand. With Elena's words, most of my guilty conscience was cleared.

“I want to protect them. I want to train them and give them their independence.” (Sirius)

“The two are broke and immature. Honestly it will only be a burden for us. However you want this nevertheless?” (Elena)

“Regardless. This is not an act of mercy, but rather one of self-satisfaction.” (Sirius)

As their teacher I should be qualified. I understand there's also a difference in growth due to their race, yet I’m able to overlook this difference due to my unprecedented amount of magic.

“Well then, want to know the reason why I happened to help you two?” (Sirius)

“I thought nobody was good. But ever since you helped me, it's become hard to think that way.” (Young Girl)

I wanted to protect both of them the instant I saw the young girl's eyes. So long as I see someone hurt, I'm going to want to protect them. This is because I remember a student in my last life with similar eyes.

To me it's sentimental, but it's fine that way. The present me, rather than as a old man with 60 years of mistakes, intends to live instinctually, like a youth.

“You were desperate to protect each other right? I thought I could trust two people like that.” (Sirius)

“If Sirius-sama says such, I will also trust you . As such, will you accept my request to give you two attendant training?” (Elena)

“Attendant training? I didn't pick the two up to be attendants.” (Sirius)

“However, I can't feed two people who don't do anything. A home and meal has value, so you should help with our work first.” (Elena)

“Mm, it certainly is.” (Sirius)

Just physical training or educating yourself isn't good enough; we must also provide them with experience in being an attendant.

“I'm ashamed to admit it, but recently there have been many times where I thought the work was overwhelming and that we needed more attendants.” (Elena)

“Since I don't mind the time education will take, I want permission.” (Sirius)

“If Elena allows it, I don't mind. The first thing to do is confirm it with the two siblings.” (Dee)

“Since you saved their life, I think there's no problem.” (Elena)

“Though you feel obligated to teach them a way to live, leaving it to the saved themselves should be an exception.” (Dee)

“Uhuhu, kind huh. Truly just like Aria-sama.” (Elena)

Even so, I'm embarrased when that's said to me. Feeling awkward, I decided to change the topic.

“Prepare for dinner. We should calm down with a meal. I got fresh pork cutlet today.” (Sirius)

“Is it a new dish? I'm delighted.” (Dee)

“Right? In my spare time I was able to make it with Noel.” (Sirius)

I hope this new dish will be the first thing that stands out to them as I make my first attack through their stomach’s.

Now that the food is ready, everyone is gathered in the parlor. Calmed down, I thought I'd finish questioning the two.

“What is this!? It's so crunchy and meaty! Moreover, the mayonnaise inside in is the best!” (Noel)

“Hush up” (Sirius)

I purposefully created a scene by passing the meal to Noel in front of the two. By the way, I sandwiched the cutlet in slices of bread.

While Noel turned ecstatic with her favorite mayonnaise, handing it over in front of them was a mistake. The two looked jealously at the fragrant dish as Reus began to drool.

“It would be bad for you, so you shouldn't eat any.” (Sirius)

“I don’t believe you! Isn't that Oneesan eating it!?” (Reus)

“H-Hey Reus! Sorry for my younger brother’s rudeness” (Young Girl)

“Don't worry about it. By the way, what's the last thing you both ate?” (Sirius)

“That is…there wasn't any meat to eat, so we ate wildflowers but we threw them up. The soup now was the first meal in a while.” (Young Girl)

“Is that so. Not eating weakened your internal organs. If you eat that now you'll throw up.” (Sirius)

“I won't throw up!” (Reus)

“Sorry Sorry!” (Young Girl)

Reus continued to make brazen statements not understanding the situation. He lived with such an attitude as a slave.

“Well hmm, if you sound healthy, in order to eat you need to be patient.” (Sirius)

“Yes! Ah…S-Sorry” (Young Girl)

The girl, apparently also wanting to eat it, unintentionally responded and was embarrased. Well, honesty is good.

“I introduced myself earlier, but shall I re-introduce myself?” (Sirius)

“Yea yea, who the heck are you?” (Reus)

“Reus!” (Young Girl)

“It's fine, then I shall introduce myself. I am Sirius, master of this House” (Sirius)

Next I introduce Elena, Dee, and Noel. During my introductions, Noel accidentally chokes on some water, but it doesn’t affect the flow of the conversation.

“Um, is Sirius-sama a noble?” (Young Girl)

“A noble for now I guess? But speaking to me casually is good; I’m a different type of person.” (Sirius)

“Such a reason. A-Anyways, I am Emilia. Although it's late, thank you for helping us. Hey, you too” (Emilia)

“…I'm…I am Reus” (Reus)

Emilia and Reus huh. Since Reus's voice quickly became submissive, maybe he understood I was a noble and pulled back?

“Your voice quickly became quiet, huh. What happened to your confidence up to now?” (Sirius)

“Uu, shut up! My name is Reus! Son of the amazingly strong and proud Phelios!” (Reus)

“So, the son of the amazingly strong and proud Phelios doesn't have the manners to say thanks for the help received?” (Sirius)

“Uu!?” (Reus)

I don't particularly want to torment him, but this is part of teaching him. Although he may be a child, a decent person that is unable to thank their benefactor should be corrected. The servants support my side by saying nothing and waiting for orders.

“Ah, Thank…you” (Reus)

“Mm, well okay. With this, introductions are complete, so do you have any questions?” (Sirius)

“Ah, umm…what's going to happen to us after this?” (Reus)

That's what worries me the most. Rather than proceeding, we need to present what choices there are and aren't.

“I have nothing but Reus. No parents, no family, no money. Therefore, I don't know what I should do” (Emilia)

“Emilia and Reus, being left behind like that. Please stay here until you're healed” (Sirius)

“Eh? But we're both slaves” (Emilia)

“Since there's no collar, you're no longer a slave right? After you get well there are 2 options. One way is for you two to do as you like afterwards. Another is to learn a way to live from me.” (Sirius)

“Learn…is it?” (Emilia)

“That's right, I will provide the necessary strength and knowledge for survival in this world. Naturally I will also provide meals and necessities in the meantime.” (Sirius)

“He's lying sister! An adult that talks like that must have an ulterior motive!” (Reus)

“Reus…but…” (Emilia)

“Are you two not frustrated?” (Sirius)

“Wh-what would you know!?” (Reus)

“Don't you think it's frustrating wanting to protect each other but not being able to fight back against a mere monster? Isn't merely being deceived by an adult good?” (Sirius)

With those words the two hid their faces in frustration. It's a bitter lesson. Even though it's easy to do.

“You said there was nothing but your younger brother. If there's nothing to lose, follow me” (Sirius)

“Why…go so far for us?” (Emilia)

“No reason. If you force me to answer, it was a whim. Think of it as good luck” (Sirius)

“….Yes, we'll follow you” (Emilia)

“Sister!?” (Reus)

It's somewhat of a letdown. I thought I would have to press for a decision all day, but the girl was more proactive than expected.

“We don't have any other choice , and you say your teaching makes a person stronger? I want to become strong to protect Reus” (Emilia)

“B-Because I have to protect sister!” (Reus)

“Then Reus also agrees? Moreover, don't you think this attitude resembles your father?” (Sirius)

“Wrong! Father was bigger and stronger. 'You' and us aren't the same as him!” (Reus)

Oy oy, don't compare me with him. Since I look like a 6-year-old I don't feel the same to Reus, but for Emilia it seems different. I thought she was just a helpless girl, but she might be an unexpectedly good find.

“It isn’t 'You', it’s Sirius-sama. Since you decided to follow him, you should address him properly” (Emilia)

“I-I got it sister. S-Sirius…sama” (Reus)

“Even though my younger brother is useless, please treat us well Sirius-sama” (Emilia)

Even though Reus didn't want to, the two silently bowed. At any rate it turned out fine in the end. Although half forced, to be able to teach again and for the two to receive protection until they become strong is a WIN-WIN relationship. I can't complain.

“I have various thoughts as well, but treat me well. Your resolution can't be half hearted” (Sirius)

“”We'll do our best!”” (Emilia and Reus)

“To be brief….Show me your resolve! “ (Sirius)

Though as tattered as ever, their expressions softened immediately. I think children are best when smiling. Though not yet, some day the two children will overcome their past and smile again.

“Since it seems the conversation is done, is it okay for us, the family, to explain?” (Elena)

“That's right, I’ll leave it to you” (Sirius)

They should learn the family rules from Elena-tachi who are in a similar situation.

“First your appearances. Take this medication and wipe your bodies” (Elena)

“Here’s the medicine” (Dee)

“Right, here's hot water and a towel!” (Noel)

“”Eh? Eh?”” (Emilia and Reus)

“Next clothes, after getting your measurements taken, get some hand-me-downs” (Elena)

“Right, measurements are done!” (Noel)

“Clothes here” (Dee)

“”Eeh!? EEh!?”” (Emilia and Reus)

Elena, Dee, and Noel, adjusted the attire of the two while they stood there in a daze. Since their injuries are completely healed, about 5 days should be enough to allow their minds to adjust, right? Naturally I include this in my treatment plan.

While talking to the two, they're being pushed around like rag dolls as clothes are put on them, I form a schedule in my head.

Emilia:

7 year old girl with hair that shines silver down to her shoulders in a bob-cut.

With small eyes and future prospects of growing into a beautiful woman.

One of the few Silver-wolf-tribe of the Adroad continent, daughter of Phelios.

Helped with housework in the village and was like a caring big sister to the children.

Hasn't used magic, so her attribute is unknown.

Reus:

5 years old, Emilia's younger brother.

Not inferior to his undaunted sister, a mischievous silver-haired boy with an attitude that mocks the heavens.

Has distinct small clefts at the tip of his ears. Like a mark of a cat being castrated, it's like a cut on the tip of the ear.

Because of his many cheeky remarks, I must culture him thoroughly before I forge him.

Attribute is unknown like his sister.

Yep, like before, teaching students gets me fired up.

Just imagining their potential brings me great pleasure.

I, Sirius

At 6 years old, was able to get 2 students.

Chapter 14

The Road to Gaining Trust

There are silver-wolf tribe villages scattered all across the Adroad continent.

One of those is the west village, that's the village where Emilia and Reus used to live. Surrounded by a forest, it's a peaceful village which makes a living by hunting and farming..... or so it used to be.

I'm saying "it used to be" because I heard that the village is no more and has already collapsed without leaving a trace.

A little more than a year ago, Emilia and Reus used to live peacefully, however, the village was suddenly attacked by a monster pack.

Naturally, they resisted, but they started getting pushed back by the monsters that exceeded the residents by far. Though Emilia's father was a powerful chief who fought bravely, he was eaten right before Emilia's eyes, not being able to win against the strength of numbers.

Reus thankfully didn't have to look at the scene since he had stayed with his mother. A monster had approached the sobbing Emilia, but her mother jumped in and saved her by a hair's breadth. Though the three kept running away, they ended up being surrounded by monsters, the mother entrusted Emilia with her younger brother and leaped into the group of monsters by herself.

Thanks to the assault that took their mother's life, the two were able to run away from the monsters' pack.

Distancing themselves from the village, the two kept running while clueless about directions. They were exhausted before long, and they were picked up by humans who happened to pass by, but those guys were, unfortunately, slave traders. Though treating

them as merchandise should have been enough as it was, this is a different world. The treatment of two seems to have been terrible. They were not given enough meals, and being kicked and punched for resisting even a little was commonplace for them.

Emilia wasn't able to talk, it seems to be because her throat was damaged from eating what she was given which was poisoned without her knowing. Reus had eaten it before to foretaste and fell sick, because of that, he became mistrustful of people and doesn't eat.

Still, in order not to waste their parents' sacrifice, they kept living. While the two repeatedly resisted without being sold, their lives as slaves had kept going for almost a year before they noticed.

And then, an opportunity to run away came at last.

The slave traders' convoy was attacked by a swarm of monsters. Having been driven out of their village by a group of monsters, being conversely helped by one was sad.

Under the cover of the confusion, the pair ran away and kept on wandering in the forest while frightened by the monsters. Continuously losing mana to their collars, they encountered a monster while unsteady on their feet. Although they continued to escape desperately, they just couldn't do it and they finally ended up falling from losing all their strength.

That's where I intervened.

"Oh boy, those two were at that place for that kind of reason…." (Lior)

Several days after picking up the pair, I was relaxing at Lior's house. I finished a fierce battle some time ago in today's daily bout and I'm now taking a rest while drinking tea. And since I was asked about the two people in question, I explained.

"Mhm, a group of monsters attacked their village, huh? And you said they lived as slaves afterwards too? Those fellows are really unlucky. (Lior)

“Honestly. And their health maintenance is no laughing matter either, even though their injuries are healing steadily.” (Sirius)

“And their parents disappeared before their eyes, the trauma has got to be deep, right? Then, what are you gonna do?” (Lior)

“At first, I have to befriend them.” (Sirius)

The two have a firm will to get stronger. Getting stronger is an important factor.

However, each of them has a small problem.

First, Emilia; she’s obedient since she understands that she owes her life to me, but her insides are extremely unstable.

Although she seems like a brave older sister when in front of her younger brother, I witnessed her quietly crying many times when by herself. If she doesn’t get rid of her fear and uneasiness, the sadness of losing her parents in front of her eyes won’t heal any time soon, will it? She has nobody she can depend on, she keeps enduring her sorrow alone, which she buried deep inside her heart. I have to discharge it somehow, since she might explode with the way things are going.

Reus is an impertinent child, however, he’s only putting up a tough front.

But that’s just a result of him desperately cheering himself up for the sake of protecting his older sister, in reality, he’s scared and wants to run away. Having noticed that, it seems like Elena sometimes ends up spoiling Reus when they’re alone. Elena’s understanding is really something, but It’s also natural for Reus to still seek a mother figure as a child.

I wonder if it’s because he can’t stomach that I’m highly valued by his elder sister and Elena or something like that, but at any rate, he rebels against me. Though it’s likely to get solved once he grows up a little more, it won’t just go away if left as it is.

In the end, It’s all because the trust from the pair is insufficient.

I can't keep cutting corners on the training that will start after this, we'll need a steady communication in daily life.

"I'm not telling them to smile during training, but I want them to at least smile when they settle down for a meal. They're still children." (Sirius)

"I can smile while swinging a sword though." (Lior)

"That's just you old-man. You creep." (Sirius)

"Hahahaha! I'm perfectly aware of myself. And how harsh of you to reach that kind of conclusion about me." (Lior)

"Get lost. I'll raise apprentices that you'll envy, old-man." (Sirius)

"Mhm, I look forward to it. So, if you want to teach them the sword, I don't mind helping." (Lior)

"Yeah, there is that too, huh? I'll consider it. Then, it's about time for me to leave, isn't it?" (Sirius)

"Worrying about your disciples, aren't you? I thought about having another match but it can't be helped." (Lior)

By the way, in the fifty matches with Lior, I am at thirty wins, twelve defeats and eight ties.

This old-man, he's a creep who's more pleased when he's defeated than when he wins. Given that he's, above all, happy to challenge a strong man, he never loses on purpose, what an arduous old-man.

Though I barely won today, lately, Lior is regaining power at an abnormal speed. I might easily fall behind if I get careless. Since he allows me to feel constantly pressured, a rival is more than welcome.

Parting with Lior, it was already evening by the time I got done with my business and came back home.

As I get off the sky and land in front of the gate, I see Noel and Emilia who were cleaning the door. Though Noel doesn't change, Emilia opens her eyes wide, dumbfounded.

"Welcome home. Hey, Emi-chan, greet him too. " (Noel)

"A…. ah, yes! Welcome back, Sirius-sama." (Emilia)*(TLN:She's more polite)*

"I'm home. You're acting unusually weird, did something happen?" (Sirius)

"Not really…… Ah, come to think of it, it was her first time seeing Sirius-sama's flying magic." (Noel)

"Oh, now that you mention it, that's the case, isn't it? She fainted when I saved her." (Sirius)

"Was that… magic?" (Emilia)

"It seems so. Since you won't see the end of it if you get surprised by every single one of Sirius-sama's actions, you should give up on understanding a person like that." (Noel)

"I understand, Noel-san." (Emilia)

"Bad, points deducted!" (Noel)

Noel flares up wholeheartedly while putting up her finger. Points deducted she says, but I feel like nothing inadequate has been done. Could it be that it's a mistake which only a maid can notice? It seems like Noel became a splendid senior.

"That's right. Hmmm, onee-chan?" (Emilia)

"Good! Yes, when you address me, use onee-chan-… ouch ouch ouch~!" (Noel)

I punish her with an iron claw. My latest favorite.

"Ouch~…… my face is becoming smaller and smaller. Please be more considerate with me." (Noel)

“Sorry, but calling you onee-chan won’t do, don’t you think? Can’t you at least make it “senpai”?” (Sirius)

Though it’s no good to scold the senior in front of her junior, my hand unintentionally reacted from the excess of stupidity.

“Wait, the person herself already consented to it. Right, Emi-chan?” (Noel)

“Ah, yes. I don’t mind calling her Onee-san, I guess” (Emilia)

She’s not able to conceal her confusion. However, they seem to get along, so I wonder if I should just leave it be.

“You were a little late today. Were you looking for something?” (Noel)

“I had to secure ingredients for a new dish.” (Sirius)

“Hoho. Is it sweet? Is it spicy?” (Noel)

“Spicy, I guess? I think I’ll make a hamburger with a combination of my tofu and minced meat.” (Sirius)

“I see! I don’t really understand but I look forward to it.” (Noel)

“You have no shame, do you ?” (Sirius)

As I cut through the two people with a wry smile, I turned around, feeling Emilia’s gaze.

“What is it?” (Sirius)

“Ah… no, nothing…” (Emilia)

“Tofu hamburgers are good for your health, so eat a lot.” (Sirius)

“Ah, ok.” (Emilia)

Mhm, she follows my instructions but she suddenly tenses when it comes to casual conversation and small talk.

Her vigilance still isn't cleared, huh? It seems she recovered enough to be able to help with work, I wonder if I should take action soon.

"Wow…… A new realm of flavor has been opened once again." (Noel)

After dinner, the attendants, who finished eating the tofu hamburgers, are nodding satisfactorily.

"Unlike the usual grilled meat, this was very easy to eat. As expected of Sirius-sama." (Elena)

"For something like tofu to generate such a taste and texture. This dish is pretty deep, isn't it~?" (Noel)

"Yeah. Now I'll try to do it too." (Dee)

"Mhm, you're welcome to do it." (Sirius)

In contrast to the three praising ones, the two newcomers looked like they weren't convinced for some reason. That attitude is promptly cut by Elena.

"How about you two? It seems like you had a second helping, and found it palatable." (Elena)

"Mhh…. yes." (Emilia)

"M-maybe…." (Reus)

"In that's the case, please convey it properly. Because the person who cooks the meal is bound to be glad to be praised and thanked regardless of them being a master or a servant." (Elena)

"Yes. Sirius-sama, It was delicious." (Emilia)

“Dammit-…. i-it was d-delicious….” (Reus)

“No no. You don’t have to forcibly say it, just saying it when you frankly think that it’s delicious is enough.” (Sirius)

Elena helps by giving them a firm moral lesson.

However, I don’t understand. Though Reus is rebelling in every respect, Emilia is helplessly difficult to read. She seems to be getting more downhearted as the day goes by, should I hurry up?

“Emilia, please come to my room after.” (Sirius)

“-! Ah, yes.” (Emilia)

“What are you going to do to my elder sister?!” (Reus)

“It’s just the usual. Elena, if you don’t mind.” (Sirius)

“Please leave it to me. Reus, let us study a little.” (Elena)

“But, my sister, my sister…. aaaaah———!” (Reus)

Reus was pulled by Elena and departed.

Though he’s reacting doubtfully, what I’m going to do really is nothing suspicious at all.

“You two, stay away for a little while.” (Sirius)

“”Understood.”” (Noel and Dee)

The voices of both Dee and Noel harmonize. These fellows’ compatibility is perfect. Before I try to go back to my room, Noel calls me to a halt and floats a smile while raising her thumb up.

“Sirius-sama, she’s a good woman—— ouch ouch ouch~! Not the faaaace~~!” (Noel)

A few minutes after returning to my room, a timid knock resounded.

“Enter.” (Sirius)

“…..Excuse me.” (Emilia)

The door opens, and Emilia enters with a nervous look.

Instead of night clothes, she wore an oversized robe, which she took off before I asked her to. Wearing only underwear, she averted her eyes shamefully.

“Well then, please lie down on the bed face up.” (Sirius)

“… Yes.” (Emilia)

I’ll say it again, I’m not doing a questionable deed.

I think nothing more than that the seven-year-old girl is cute, in the first place, my six-year-old self’s libido is still undeveloped. That being said, I called her here aiming to erase her cicatrixes.

The girls’ scars are merely due to things like cuts and bruises, so, in this case, even without any complex medical practice such as a surgical operation, I can somehow manage with my mana regeneration.

Why do cicatrices remain to begin with?

When a person cures a wound with self-healing, various cells cooperate and restore the wound, but even if the skin on the surface is perfectly cured, an organism called scar tissue still remains within. Since it looks different from skin, it appears as a scar. In short, a cicatrix is not skin on the surface, It stands out because its inside part is abnormal.

As for the burning and penetration wounds’ case, I’ll omit it for now.

I apply the mana by pinpointing it there, it's a forcible method that allows me to eliminate the scar tissue in the metabolism and erase cicatrixes. Mana aside, I think this feat is only possible because I have the necessary medical knowledge.

Although it would probably be easier if I could use recovery magic of the water attribute, my non-attribute's compatibility with the other attributes is really bad. It's at a level where I was almost squeezed dry in an attempt to use [Flame]**.**

Oh well, my attribute doesn't matter, let's start the treatment quickly.

"Today is the stomach and its surroundings. I'm going to touch you now." (Sirius)

"Please do." (Emilia)

The arms, feet and such have already been done, what remains should be the belly and the back, which are covered by clothes. Reus is a man so only some small wounds are left on him and I'm almost done with him, but a woman's skin needs to be treated with care. I use [Search] while carefully pouring some mana. She endures, shutting her eyes, bright red, writhing and tickling with every movement of my hand.

Keeping the treatment going without any obstructive thoughts, I felt satisfied as the scars around the stomach disappeared.

"Mhm, the skin has become beautiful. As I thought, that's how a girl should be." (Sirius)

"Thank….you" (Emilia)

"Next is the back. Please turn around." (Sirius)

I have her turn to her back, but there are many scars there as well.

I guess It's because violence is instinctively done on the back, but those scars are dejectedly pitiful. Taking my mind off my worries, I talked to her while continuing her treatment.

"Did you get accustomed to living here? Noel moves solely according to her feelings, so I guess others might get tired of it." (Sirius)

“Ah, yes! I’m taken care of very well. Noe-…nee-san is kind….” (Emilia)

Why is she acting so full of affection? From my experience, she might be acting affectionate but I think that it’s because she’s depressed.

“Please say it without reservation if something is going on.” (Sirius)

“E-enough. Any more than this is going too far for me.” (Emilia)

Unfortunately, the conversation doesn’t go anywhere. She just simply answers to what she is told. Though I want her to show her real feelings, it’s no use. But one has got to start somewhere.

Progressing work silently, and as the scars on the back had almost disappeared, I noticed one single different cicatrix. It’s on her shoulder, this wound came from being bitten unlike the cuts and the whip marks.

“Were you bitten by Reus? I should cure that too, shouldn’t I?” (Sirius)

“Don’t!” (Emilia)

The moment I touch her shoulder, she takes some distance away to separate. With a face distorted in fear, she breathes heavily while hiding the scar with her hand. Since she seemed like she was going to run away at any moment, I put my hands up and talked slowly.

“Look, I won’t do anything. I won’t get angry so please speak up.” (Sirius)

“This…. This is no good….” (Emilia)

“You mean it’s no good to erase this scar?” (Sirius)

She nods repeatedly to my words. Having stopped her from running away, she’s now looking at me to appeal me to sit on the edge of the bed. I revert my adult like tone to a child’s, because I don’t know what she’ll do if if I irritate her. I guess she can be calmed down if I call out to Elena, it’s something.

For now, I must dig into the depths of her heart.

“Can you tell me the reason? Who is this wound from?” (Sirius)

“…My mother” (Emilia)

Eh, domestic violence? As if. However, what’s with her mother biting her shoulder?

“We, the silver wolf tribe, bite others… to express affection…” (Emilia)

It’s like puppy companions biting each other, or maybe something like a spoiled pet dog play-biting his master. Come to think of it, the dog that I had kept in my childhood used to do this to me, didn’t he?

“Biting the shoulder is a proof of love. My mother bit me…. and jumped into the flock of monsters!” (Emilia)

She probably recalled it. The back of her mother who jumped to her death to allow the pair to escape. Tears started overflowing from Emilia’s eyes.

“Why…what for?! Why did you leave me, mother?! Father too, why?! Didn’t you say that you love me?! Come back if you do love me! Even if you entrusted me with Reus, it’s too much for me! I’m the elder sister, but that doesn’t make me happy. It’s useless if mother and father aren’t here! Why was I enslaved? Why was I beaten? It’s so painful! Why, why did I have to go through such a thing?! I’m tired…… I’m tired already……” (Emilia)

Crying, she buried her face in her laps and curled up to escape from it all.

It’s too heavy for a seven-year-old child to react to her parents dying before her very eyes. She held on well up to here, though she was just desperately pretending to be tough in front of her younger brother.

“Emilia.” (Sirius)

“Nooo…” (Emilia)

“Emilia, listen to me.” (Sirius)

“-!?” (Emilia)

I approach the girl who rejects me, and I pat her by putting my hand on her head like the first time we met.

“Was your mother good at fighting?” (Sirius)

She shakes her head at the question.

“So, your mother wasn’t strong. However, she voluntarily jumped into the group of monsters. Why do you think she did that?” (Sirius)

“…I don’t know.” (Emilia)

“It was in order to defend you. And, try to remember, how was your mother’s face?” (Sirius)

“…She was smiling…” (Emilia)

“The fact is that she didn’t put value in her life for the sake of protecting you guys. And, the bite wound on your shoulder. It’s evidence that you were bitten strongly enough for a mark to say. In short, you are loved to that degree, it’s that kind of thing, isn’t it?” (Sirius)

“Mother….” (Emilia)

“The last words of your mother, do you remember them?” (Sirius)

“Please live strongly, I love you…… “ (Emilia)

“Well then, live strongly. Get stronger to live up to your mother’s love. Moreover, you have to protect your brother, right?” (Sirius)

“Yes…Reus, I have to protect him.” (Emilia)

“That’s right. You have to go forward even though it’s sad. And I’ll be watching over you, alright?” (Sirius)

“Uuu…… aa…… Aaaaaaa!” (Emilia)

She came with a jump to my chest with a power that could mistake it for a tackle. I’m taken aback by the unexpected force, but I somehow manage to hold my ground, kindly hugging her. Though at first I was gathering her ruffled hair, I’m now gently and calmly stroking the beautiful glossy silver hair.

“It must have been hard. However, it’s all good now, cry to your heart’s content because nobody will hurt you here.” (Sirius)

“Yes… Yes…” (Emilia)

“Be at ease, you’ll be able to eat to a full stomach in the future. You’ll get a lot stronger. Your mind will strengthen like your mother’s, too. “ (Sirius)

“Yes… I’ll get stronger.” (Emilia)

“Talk about your feelings clearly. Consult us when you’re troubled.” (Sirius)

“Yes…I’ll talk…” (Emilia)

“Find something you want to do someday. I’ll support you with it.” (Sirius)

“…… Yes!” (Emilia)

With the power of her hug strengthening by the end, she kept crying all out.

When she, who kept hollowing out, became quiet, a calm sleeper’s breathing resounded.

Isn’t it only natural that one would get tired after continuing to cry that much? But well, I guess her deflation should be sufficient with this.

I wipe her face, which is covered in tears and snot, I lay her down in my bed, and I spread a blanket over her. I'll pass it to her since, today exceptionally, her face shouldn't be seen by her younger brother.

Upon my going out of the room while hoping not to wake up the girl who was sleeping with a calm face, all the attendants excluding Reus were waiting in the corridor. They must have gotten nervous from the excessive crying and noise.

"Thanks for your hard work. Her collected resentment should have been erased with this. Those were splendid skills." (Elena)

"No, it somehow worked out, but it could have failed if I had not done it right." (Sirius)

The results turned out well, but I had to excavate an old wound that she hadn't recovered from. There was even a possibility of her mind going mad from being unable to endure it upon failure. But for her strength of mind to manage to endure it despite that… No, there was her parents' affection in play, too.

What kind of face will she appear with tomorrow? She should smile.

"However, Sirius-sama, you really are a lady killer. Emi-chan already became lovestruck." (Noel)

"You know, I only bonded with her like a parent. I didn't do it for the sake of foolishly making her my woman." (Sirius)

"No no no, a woman who's not in love wouldn't react like that." (Noel)

"I think that will halt without delay. I plan for her to do a special training of my composition in a few days, so that will come to a stop." (Sirius)

"Ah! You're going to do that? Oh come on, you should be a little kinder with them… it's a no go, right?" (Noel)

Noel's face went blue as she remembered my usual training and she sympathized with the pair.

"What about Reus?" (Sirius)

"Though that child is not at Emilia's level, he has spit out what he accumulated in various ways and he's sleeping." (Elena)

"Is that so? Sorry, I consider that I, who picked him up, should be doing it but…" (Sirius)

"He was seeking for parents so I should be qualified, don't you agree? Besides, it was really cute." (Elena)

"You're fit as a mother indeed, Elena. I, too, think of you as one." (Sirius)

"-!? Ah, t-thank you very much!" (Elena)

Elena hung down her head deeply and joyfully. Why did she thank me just now? Well, whatever.

"Where am I going to sleep tonight? Emilia is using my room" (Sirius)

"Then, do it in my room." (Elena)

So fast, Elena! Didn't you raise your hand before I even finished talking?

"No, I'm good with the sofa in the living room. I'll prepare a blanket." (Sirius)

"That's no good. I would not, could not, let my master sleep in that kind of place. I'll sleep on the sofa." (Elena)

"I don't want you to sleep there, you're getting tired recently, Elena. A room for two huh…." (Sirius)

Hey, the attendants pair. Why are you looking away? And the cat ears over there, don't try to whistle if you can't do it.

“My room… is crude so..” (Dee)

“I think I should sleep next to Emi-chan. I get lonely when I wake up by myself, you know?” (Noel)

“Then, your room is vacant, right? I’ll be borrowing your bed, Noel.” (Sirius)

“No, that is-…my tail has been losing a lot of hair recently and my futon is full of it.” (Noel)

Your improvised excuse is really bad. However, I caught up on the ulterior motive. It’s THAT kind of thing, isn’t it?

“Ah…. Elena, shall we sleep together?” (Sirius)

“Yes. Well then, I’ll go take care of the bed making without delay.” (Elena)

A smile is spread on her whole face. I expected her to just walk out, but she went back to her room three times faster than usual.

“It’s still a little early but I’m also going to prepare to sleep. Sirius-sama, I’ll be borrowing your bed.” (Noel)

“Aah, yeah, just do what you want.” (Sirius)

I’m already worn-out for some reason. Thinking about it properly, it’s only natural for me to get tired after fighting Lior today, right? I’ll just go to sleep since It looks like Elena’s preparations are almost done.

“Sirius-sama.” (Dee)

“What is it?” (Sirius)

“Please forgive my impolite intervention, but, about that pair, you didn’t do anything wrong to them, Sirius-sama.” (Dee)

“Is that really so?” (Sirius)

“Indeed. At the very least, the two can live a better life under your wing. They absolutely won’t become unhappy.” (Dee)

“….Thank you” (Sirius)

With a bow, Dee brought this to a conclusion and returned to his room.

That’s right, though I don’t know how the pair’s future will turn out, it will change according to my way of raising them. Though it’s best to let them find their own path, they have to be guided, so that they won’t choose a life full of regrets.

“Say… I’ll get anxious if I’m watched that much so….” (Sirius)

“I’m very sorry. However, I can’t sleep if I’m not facing this side.” (Elena)

“Don’t lie.” (Sirius)

That night, Elena kept watching me with a happy face.

As of yet, the early morning sky is only slightly bright.

I get out of bed, trying not to wake up Elena, who’s sleeping next to me, and I change my clothes to a sportswear prepared in the living room beforehand. I take a lot of moisture, I go out, I stretch, and start today’s jogging vigorously, regardless of my loosened body.

Since I’m running in the garden, I go by tiptoeing in consideration of the people sleeping. This is also a part of training. I gradually accelerate, and when I get warm enough, I activate [Boost] and dash toward the forest.

I don’t fly in the sky, I use the trees as obstacles, and I run through without losing speed. I kick a branch, I jump over a river, I step on a monster, I fly over a cliff, and I climb it, my goal is the top of the highest mountain in the surroundings.

Thereupon I switch off [Boost] and I start a muscule training that emphasis on push-ups, sit-ups, and running. It’s a low oxygen training on high altitude. The altitude here is about roughly 3,000m(above sea level), the oxygen on high ground is low, so the partial pressure

is reduced which puts a large load on the body, the effects of training rise rapidly when it's done like that. I recommend it since it visibly raises endurance as well.

By the way, with my master, I was made to do it in a snow mountain where the altitude exceeded 5000m. I seriously thought I was going to die, and it's just one case among many others.

Since the time for breakfast is approaching, I stop my training here after around an hour.

I return by going down the mountain while flying in the sky and gradually reducing my altitude. This is because if I descend at a dash, the difference in atmospheric pressure might cause abnormalities to my body.

My physical exercise program comes to an end when I arrive at home.

The above is my training menu for the morning.

The magic's assistance in easing my movements is really helpful. If not for the magic, I'd only have the time for climbing up the mountain and descending it.

When I wiped my dripping sweat, I felt something odd from the entranceway. Elena normally offers me a drink and a towel after exercise. While I titled my head in confusion at the unusual occurrence, I heard footsteps from behind and I turned around.

"Did you oversleep? It's quite unusual of you, Elena–Ah?" (Sirius)

"Ah, good morning. Sirius-sama."

The one standing there was not Elena but Emilia. She has a flask and a towel in her hands, but she blushes and looks down shamefully. Oh, well, she must have become like that from being seen in that shameful state from yesterday. Is she trying to get my sympathy?

"Good morning Emilia. Can you give me the towel?" (Sirius)

"Ah, yes! Please take it!" (Emilia)

I receive the towel that she held out forcefully and I wipe my sweat but… I feel stares. Though she's also watching me with a flushed face, what stands out is four faces popping out from a tree in the back.

The hell are those guys doing?

"Hang in there, Emi-chan!" (Noel)

"Dammit, Nee-san with that guy it's just-Mmmhmhm!" (Reus) *(TLN: Someone is covering his mouth, got no english sfx for that)*

"Be quiet…" (Dee)

"Ahhh, youth" (Elena)

I can hear them by strengthening my hearing ability…. such a pain~.

I shoot out a light [Impact] on the tree as a threat and they scatter away. They're like pigeons.

"Hmmm, please take this drink too." (Emilia)

"Ah, sure, I'll take it." (Sirius)

A warm drink is better than a cold drink after an exercise, but this child seems to know that already. I drink up slowly, Emilia seemed to have settled down a lot by the time I returned the glass. She took several deep breaths, and after nodding once, she bowed with all her strength.

"About yesterday… Thank you!" (Emilia)

"Are you good now?" (Sirius)

"Yes! I was embarrassed but I feel fine now." (Emilia)

Just as Emilia said, I don't feel any trace of the sly atmosphere she had yesterday from her. Though her face is still red, she has a calm and refreshed expression.

"Though I'm still just a little sad, It's good already. I'll get stronger. I want to become strong like mother and father. Therefore, once again, please. Please make me strong!" (Emilia)

"Will you follow me? This training is harsher than your time as a slave. Is that still alright?" (Sirius)

"Yes! I'll follow you, Sirius-sama!" (Emilia)

"I see, you surmounted your parents' death nicely." (Sirius)

"Ah…." (Emilia)

I spontaneously patted her head. Her movements stopped just a moment but she narrowed her eyes.

"….hehe" (Emilia)

She laughed for the first time.

The young girl rised a lovely flower-like smile. Yes, as I thought, it's best for children to be smiling.

By the way, she's from the silver wolf tribe so she has a bushy tail, but she swings It with an amazing strength every time I stroke her. Wondering if she likes it, I stop patting her to experiment.

"Ah…" (Emilia)

Her tail stops. In addition, she has a sad expression. I pat her again.

"Ehehehe" (Emilia)

Her tail restarts. This is bad, It's too amusing, it's like a switch. I experiment with more strength, and I pat her with a force that puts her hair in disorder.

"Kyaaa-!" (Emilia)

She lets out a lovely scream and satisfiedly waves her tail with a force that gives it an afterimage. One would normally dislike it when it's done this rashly, right? And her hair is getting rummaged too, so why is this?

I stopped at that point since I was likely to get addicted to the cuteness. Though she was disappointed when I separated my hand, I have to endure, I have to. That feeling subsided when I tried to talk to her while facing her during breakfast, and came to a realization.

"Sirius-sama…." (Emilia)

….Wait a second.

Her eyes, for some reason… she has the eyes of a girl who fell in love.

I recall Noel's words from last night.

[However, Sirius-sama, you really are a lady-killer. Emi already became lovestruck.] (Past Noel)

No no no, hold on a second.

It certainly looked like I was trying to comfort her, but I didn't plan on things turning this way. I was planning to become a substitute for her parents, I had pictured myself as something like a guardian.

Actually, I picked up a girl who was similar to her in my previous life, and I comforted her with the words I said to Emilia. I was called father by her on the next day, I got along with her like a real father.

Emilia should therefore do the same so….. wait, a father?

Myself from my previous life…. was over 50 years old. The other party was about seven years old.

My current self…. is six years old. The other party is seven years old.

……It's a perfect Boy Meets Girl.

That's more like the age difference with a boy not a father, isn't it?! Of course she'd fall in love when hugged gently in a moment of weakness!

N-no, in any case, I succeeded in obtaining her trust. Overcoming her past, from here on, she will get stronger. She can do my special training properly without being unhappy about me so it's all good, right?

As a teacher, it's normal for me to get along with my disciple. Yes, It's totally normal.

"I love you, Sirius-sama."

I went too far.

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